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Old Huntsville

HISTORY AND STORIES OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

The Mysterious Mountain Man

For well over a hundred years there have been stories and rumors about a strange hermit who supposedly made his home in the mountains surrounding the Tennessee Valley. According to one story, he lived in the rugged mountains, alone as a hermit, after being rejected by his lady love.

Also in this issue: **A Veteran's Day Story; Tornadoes and What is to Come; Third British Invasion; Remembering Alvin York; National Guard in the Korean War; Huntsville Street Kid; A Wedding Day; Dog Superstitions, Recipes and More**

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The Mysterious Mountain Man

by Tom Carney

For well over a hundred years there have been stories and rumors about a strange hermit who supposedly made his home in the mountains surrounding the Tennessee Valley. According to one story, he lived in the rugged mountains, alone as a hermit, after being rejected by a lady love.

Another story claims the hermit had been a soldier during the Civil War. After seeing thousands of young men maimed and killed on the battlefields, he supposedly fled to the quiet solitude of the mountains, away from a society that condoned the killing of its fellow man.

While many of the stories have been vastly exaggerated, the true story, about a man named Dr. Marx Edgeworth Lazarus, is one truly stranger than fiction.

Marx Lazarus was born in 1835 in Wilmington, North Carolina, the only son of one of the most distinguished Jewish families in the Ante Bellum South. His father was a prosperous merchant with ships plying the trade between England, Cuba and the United States.

As a young man Lazarus showed little inclination to join the family business, so the family decided to send him to medical school. He studied medicine in Paris, France where he received his degree before transferring to Edinburgh, Scotland to study under Dr. Bryan Slocum, one of the most distinguished surgeons of the period.

At first Lazarus seemed to thrive in his new environment. As the son of a family with immense wealth he was welcomed into a decadent society where the European aristocracy partied until the wee hours of the morning and Counts, Lords and Princes squandered immense sums on the turn of a card.

Always a fastidious dresser, Lazarus began to emulate his new friends by ordering immense wardrobes of the latest styles, many of which he would discard after wearing only one time. He had a body servant, a housekeeper and a coachman, as well as a large apartment on one of the city's most fashionable boulevards.

Despite the luxury and comforts he enjoyed, a darker side of his personality began to emerge. He began to grow irritable and would often disappear for long periods at a time.

"It's probably my age that tricks people into thinking I'm an adult."

Jeremiah Lewis, 75

Old Huntsville
History And Stories of the Tennessee Valley

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He would shun his friends, refusing to talk to them, and then suddenly act as if nothing had happened.

Perhaps the strangest quirk he developed was his method of communication. After deciding that most people talked too much, he would go for weeks at a time refusing to say anything except "Yes" or "No." Then, just as suddenly, he would begin talking nonstop, talking for hours at a time on whatever subject that captured his fancy.

After completing his studies he opened up a practice in New York where his skills as a doctor and surgeon quickly earned him wide acclaim among his peers. As the practice grew, his eccentric personality became even more pronounced. Stories of him becoming angry and throwing surgical instruments on the floor were common. The sign on his office saying "Closed" became a common sight as he disappeared for long periods of time.

Regardless of his bizarre behavior, Lazarus was in much demand as a physician. Other doctors, unable to diagnose a case or unwilling to attempt a risky operation, would refer patients to Lazarus who would treat them with amazing results.

The beginning of the Civil War presented Lazarus with a moral dilemma. He strongly believed any type of war was wrong and was against secession. He was, however, also a Southerner who found it impossible to refuse his home state in a time of war. As the guns on distant battlefields began their deadly chorus, Lazarus closed his practice in New York and moved back to the place of his birth, Wilmington, North Carolina. Although offered a commission in the Confederate Army Medical Corp., he chose instead to enlist as a private, possibly becoming the only surgeon during the Civil War with such a lowly rank.

The bloody carnage of a war he did not believe in left him an emotional wreck. At one time, surrounded by limbs he had amputated and with soldiers crying out in pain, he was reported to have broke down crying, "Oh, the folly of healing one, only to send him to war again!"

At the end of the war Lazarus returned to his practice in New York. Although considered a genius by many, his bizarre behavior had began to make him an outcast. Strangely, although he had inherited an immense fortune, he developed a fascination with the fledgling Socialist party, among whose goals was the redistribution of wealth. In about 1897 he moved to a socialist commune in Ripon, Wisconsin.

Dr. Lazarus had become well known in the medical field as a result of the many research papers he had published and traveled to New York occasionally to consult on difficult medical cases. Most of his time, however, was spent

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writing articles about socialism for various newspapers. During this time he met Elizabeth Forster who was writing similar articles for a Chicago paper and who also shared many of his beliefs. They began a correspondence which most people assumed would lead to marriage.

Lazarus soon became disillusioned by the commute as petty bickering began to split the movement. By this time he had almost completely withdrawn from society. All he wanted to do was find a place where he could be alone.

When a friend of his, Dr. John Wyeth, a native of Guntersville, suggested the Tennessee Valley, the idea appealed to Lazarus. With the aid of Dr. Wyeth, in 1871 he purchased a small farm about twenty miles from Huntsville, sight unseen, by mail.

The overgrown farm, with its dilapidated cabin perched precariously on the side of the mountains, proved to be ideal for the eccentric doctor. Strangers rarely ventured down the dirt path leading to the farm and the nearest community, Guntersville, was about fifteen miles away - close enough for supplies but far enough away to discourage visitors.

When local citizens learned of his intentions to locate in the area it was greeted with much enthusiasm. It was expected the esteemed Doctor would build a fine home befitting his position and establish a medical practice in the community. When Lazarus arrived at the steamboat landing in Guntersville, however, he went to a nearby store, purchased a few supplies, hired a wagon to carry him to his farm, and then disappeared.

Curious neighbors told of visiting the recluse who spent all his time poring over books and papers, oblivious to his surroundings. When someone tried to engage him in a conversation he would merely grunt or say "Yes" or "No." Others told of stopping by the hermit's cabin, which was devoid of furnishings except for a bed and stove, and seeing him sitting in the middle of the road staring at the sky, as if contemplating his very existence.

Some people later claimed the Doctor merely wanted to lead a simple life, free from worry or complications. If so, he probably succeeded.

Lazarus was a strong believer in the health benefits of drinking goat milk. Shortly after moving he purchased a herd and built a pen for them in his front yard. Later, when he realized they needed some sort of shelter, he simply moved the fence allowing them to enter the front door and roam the house at will.

He was fascinated by the nearby mountains, and would often spend days and weeks wandering the rugged wilderness, stopping to sleep wherever darkness found him. A handful of berries, a potato or an ear of corn from some field provided all the food he needed. There were reports of him being seen as far north as the Tennessee line and south as far as Gadsden. When his shoes wore out he simply began going barefooted, regardless of the weather. He stopped shaving and bathing and when his clothes wore out he never replaced them.

Strangely, despite his bizarre behavior, the community took it in stride. He would often travel to Guntersville for supplies, riding a bull with a homemade saddle and dressed in tattered red flannel underwear. He never had money; he would simply walk into a store, get what he wanted and walk out without saying a word. The merchants would send the bill to a local banker who would then send the bill to a firm in North Carolina that handled his family's business.

Even while living the life of a hermit, Dr. Lazarus continued to be widely recognized in the medical field. He wrote extensively, submitting

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articles to medical publications that most people said were far advanced for the time he lived in. Although he had given up the practice of medicine, other doctors still sought him out for advice.

On at least one occasion he was called on to perform a lifesaving operation. A young man near Owens Cross Roads was working in a sawmill when a piece of wood got caught in the saw blade. When he tried to wrench it free, the piece of wood flew through the air, impaling him in the chest, with part of it protruding from his back.

A doctor was summoned who quickly examined the patient before announcing there was no hope. The surgical expertise required was far beyond any local doctor's knowledge. Almost as an afterthought, he recalled reading a recent article in a medical publication by Dr. Lazarus who had described a similar operation.

"There might be chance," he told the family, "if you can get Lazarus." Fortunately one of the family members recalled seeing the doctor in the nearby mountains that morning. Lazarus, with his long scraggly beard, barefooted and dressed in red flannel underwear, was not exactly the type of doctor to instill confidence but there was no other choice.

After examining the wound Lazarus motioned for the other doctor to help him and, using the few instruments available along with kitchen utensils, cut into the chest, deftly removed the wood and sutured the cut arteries. When he finished the last stitch he dropped the instruments to the floor, turned and walked out without saying a word.

The man made a complete recovery and, poetically, named his first son John Lazarus Giles.

Even a hermit requires some type of human contact and in 1889 Lazarus renewed his correspondence with Elizabeth Forster. After almost a year of writing back and forth the doctor proposed marriage. Elizabeth, not having seen him in almost twenty years, quickly accepted.

With the preliminaries taken care of, Dr. Lazarus walked to Huntsville where he wired his family's attorneys for money. He then checked into a hotel, shaved, got a haircut and ordered a new suit of clothes before taking a train to Chattanooga where he met Elizabeth.

Apparently he cleaned up well, as they were married in a few days. The same day they boarded a steamboat for the trip to Guntersville, accompanied by twelve large trunks filled with Elizabeth's clothes.

The doctor's new bride was undoubtedly anxious to see her new home. When they arrived at the Guntersville boat dock they left her luggage and walked the eight miles to the cabin.

Perhaps it was the furnishings or maybe it was the goats, but for whatever reason Mrs. Lazarus was back in Guntersville early the next morning making one way travel arrangements for New York.

The hermit doctor was alone once again. He rarely ventured away from his cabin and broke off almost all contact with the outside world. The few supplies he needed were delivered by a merchant and dropped off in a clearing near the cabin. There the merchant would find a note listing the supplies needed for the following month.

In May of 1896 a hunter found the doctor dead in his cabin. The Marshall County News ran a short piece about his death. "The Sand Mountain Hermit died yesterday in his cabin. He was certainly a man of mystery."

The Frugal Reader

* Hit the after-holidays wrapping paper/ribbon sales and look for paper that is not specifically holiday-designed so you can use it for wrapping gifts throughout the year at a fraction of the cost.

* Washing & reusing your resealable bags is a great way to save money. To clean them, wash the bags in the dishwasher. Turn the bags inside out, upside down, and use plastic clothespins to clip them to the top rack.

* To make bathroom fixtures sparkle and look like new, use rubbing alcohol on them.

* To store leftover paint, put the lid on and turn the can upside down, making sure the lid is on tight. This will prevent the "skin" from forming on top and will be easier to stir when needed.

* Cleaning behind your refrigerator will keep it running longer and more efficiently. Another fridge cleaning tip: Make sure the unit is level. An un-level refrigerator works harder than it needs to and wastes energy.

* If your polished furniture has small scratches, try rubbing them with a shelled walnut. You'll see the scratches just disappear!

* Keeping silver jewelry in a zip lock or airtight container will keep it from oxidizing.

* You do not need to wash with hot water unless you are trying to sterilize your laundry. Use the cold setting to wash & rinse to save money. Washing this way can save the typical family at least $100 a year!

* For fresher air in the house without having to pay for those expensive sprays, squeeze a few drops of a fresh lemon into the dust bag of your vacuum cleaner.

* If you have a paper shredder, put junk mail through it and use it as packing material when shipping packages.

* For the truly frugal - when you can no longer squeeze any more toothpaste out of the tube, cut the tube open and squeeze the remainder in a bowl. Add baking soda & water, you can double the amount of the toothpaste.

* If you spray your Tupperware products with nonstick cooking spray before pouring in tomato-based sauces - you'll avoid the stains.

* Cut dryer sheets in half before using. They still work just as well. Keep an empty tissue box on the dryer for the used ones and use them to dust furniture.

* Try a sprinkle of cinnamon in your morning coffee - delicious!

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The Korean War Valor Flight

by Dale Lone Elk Casteel

Back in 1952 some of us began to arrive home from the war in Korea. Our families welcomed and thanked us for going to war and fighting for our country, but outside our families we never received any recognition or thanks from anyone else.

There were four of us boys in the same class in high school. We joined the Army National Guard when we were 16 and were mobilized into active service in 1950 as we were preparing for our senior year. We never heard from any of our classmates or anyone else from our school while in Korea. Once back home our school never did a thing to honor or recognize us, but that was okay. We knew what we had done and been through and were proud of it. Maybe the school didn't realize what it was like to be in a war.

In 2011, my friend Richard McElyea heard they were sending Korean Vets to Washington, DC on an Honor Flight to see the Korean War Monument. He signed us up to go. I never thought there was much to it since they had never recognized us before.

A few weeks before the flight, we went to Huntsville for orientation. After processing was completed, they spoke to us about what to expect. Each veteran would have a guardian with them at all times. They said, "You veterans will be treated like celebrities" and I thought, "Yeah, that's a joke—there might be a few people at the airport."

On November 12th, we arrived at the Huntsville Airport at 5am and to my surprise, there was a large crowd, an Army band was playing and also a gentleman who played the bagpipes. Three Star General Richard Formica, who we had met the week before at the Veteran's Museum breakfast, was there. Eric Sollmon, Channel 48 newscaster, was there too. They were going with us. There were 110 veterans with most of their guardians (some of us were to meet our guardians in DC) along with the Valor Flight Group, paramedics and the gentleman with the bagpipes.

The pilot announced that we would arrive in Washington within one hour and twenty minutes. My opinion of Washington and the people there was not too high. I guess I had based my feelings on how I feel about politicians and our government. When we landed and disembarked I got the surprise of my life.

We were greeted by a huge crowd of some of the most caring and friendly people I have ever met. The Valor Flight Group was right. They did treat us like celebrities. I didn't find--my guardian for some time. He finally showed up having gone to the wrong airport. I thought, "Yeah, I'm going to have a time with this guy." He later told me he had to drive about a hundred miles an hour to get to the right airport.

Buses waited to take us from one destination to others. Our first stop was the Korean War Monument. It was an amazing sight. A lot of memories rushed back to me. I thought about my days in Korea. I believe each of us said a silent prayer for all our brothers who didn't make it home. Arlington National Cemetery was a sobering sight and also the changing of the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I was honored to see the grave of my hero Audie Murphy. The Marine Monument of the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima was touching

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because of my Indian brother Ira Hayes.

My guardian, Carl Williamson, quickly became my good friend. He had a bag on his back and someone asked what was in it. He said, "I got drinks, chips, candy ..." and jokingly named other things like lipstick. Later as we walked and talked I said, "Carl, you know when I signed up for this flight, I asked for a young, beautiful girl for my guardian. What did they give me—a black man who carries lipstick in his bag." He cracked up.

Those people in Washington DC were the first ones to give us any recognition for serving in the war. I guess the people of Alabama could never bring themselves to do that until we arrived back at the Huntsville Airport. After 60 years of waiting, the crowd that jammed into the airport made a bunch of old soldiers feel like they had come home again.

I wish to thank the president of Valor Flight, Mr. Steve Celuch and his group. It takes many hours of work and planning to pull off an event like this. I am eternally grateful. My thanks go to the paramedics who traveled with us and to General Formica for his support. Thanks to the gentleman who played the bagpipes and traveled with us. I appreciate and thank Eric Sollman and Channel 48 News for making the trip. I feel like I have a new friend in Eric. I thank the children from Lynn Fanning Elementary School for the notes and colored pictures. They were great.

I want to thank everyone who had anything to do with this trip. Korea may have been the forgotten war, but we old veterans never forgot. What you did for us on November 12, 2011 filled a void in our hearts that had been there for 60 years.

Thank you and God Bless America.

Love is temporary insanity cured by marriage.

"Remember when Huntsville was so small you read the newspapers just to see if the gossip was really true?"

Madeline Jones

The Woodyard

(Me and Bubba Down by the Woodyard)

by Jim McBride

One of my closest cousins growing up in the 1950s was Jackie Dale Isbell. I don't know who nicknamed him Bubba but that's what we all called him. Only his teachers used his given name. We were the same age and lived a couple of blocks from each other in Dallas Village.

Virgil Hillis was our maternal grandfather, Papa, to me and his other 28 grandchildren. He owned a woodyard in the 400 block of Stevens Avene. Some people still cooked on wood burning stoves back then. Papa took big blocks of wood, split them with axes and wedges, divided them into ricks and cords, loaded them on his flatbed truck and delivered them to his customers.

By the late 1950s he was growing older and his customers were opting for new electric or gas burning stoves. I faintly remember a dispute concerning a wreck between Papa and a customer from Clayton Allen's beer joint just down the street. Papa thought he was in the right because he wasn't drinking. I don't know whose fault it was but Papa lost his driver's license, effectively ending his business. Oh, but what a grand time we had when we were kids and the woodyard was full.

The split logs were ready-made building materials. We built forts where we held our super secret meetings, all the while hoping it wouldn't cave in on us. It wasn't uncommon to see snakes, mice, rabbits and other critters in the woodyard. Maybe it was the closest thing to a forest they could find. We had a lot of baby boomer friends but none of them had a cool woodyard to play in. Through me and Bubba, our heroes Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, Roy Rogers and Gene Autry all spent some time in Papa's magic woodyard.

If Papa had known what we were up to in the woodyard, he would have banned us from the premises and posted a guard. Once, we took a coverless Softball and soaked it in kerosene for several days. When we felt it was properly saturated, we set it on fire. That thing burned for hours. It was getting dark and we were afraid to leave a ball of fire overnight in the woodyard. So, we drowned it. It's probably the closest me and Bubba ever came to conducting a science experiment.

Me and Bubba were not above going door to door asking housewives if they had any coke bottles we could have. The term "soda pop" was not in our southern vocabulary and all drink bottles were "coke" (as in Coca Cola) bottles to us. Nu-Grape, Nehi, Nesbitt and Double Cola all fell under the "coke" genus. More importantly, they were worth a penny each when we redeemed them at C&M Grocery.

After a rather productive day of "coke" bottle begging, me and Bubba bought two bottles of maraschino cherries and a large bag of marshmallows. Once again we lit a fire from Papa's handy fuel source. We toasted and ate the whole bag of marshmallows and had cherries for dessert. We were two sick puppies in

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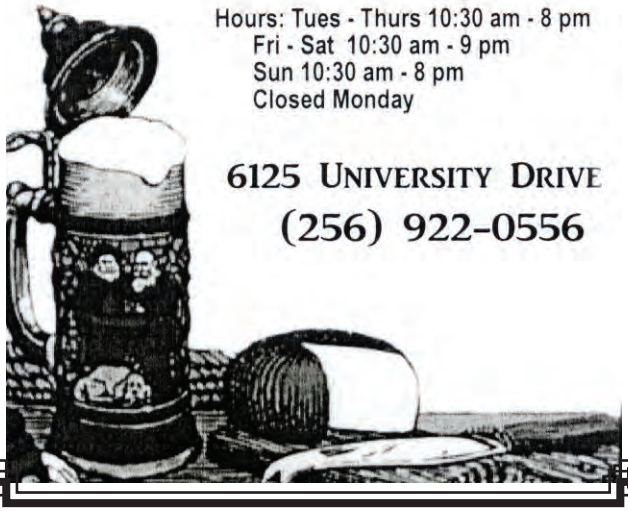

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the woodyard.

I figure I've eaten a dozen or so marshmallows over the last six decades. However, to this day, I can't look at a bottle of cherries without feeling queasy.

Another enterprising way me and Bubba earned money, and added to our resume, was to carry flyers door to door when there was a grand opening somewhere close. We would go to the store a few days before they were to open and ask if we could deliver their flyers. It took some convincing on our part for them to trust two ten-year old boys with that job. We convinced them after promising to deliver every single flyer, no throwaways.

We faithfully carried out our mission for stores like Western Auto, U-tote-M and anyone who had a sale about to happen. We made $10.00 per thousand flyers. Big money for a kid back then. How did we spend it? Usually at Goodson's 5 &10 with some of it spent on snacks to eat back at the fort. No marshmallows, no cherries.

By far the most exciting occurrence in the woodyard happened to Bubba when I was not there. I'm kinda happy I wasn't there to see Bubba get the first joint of his thumb cut off with one of Papa's hatchets.

We often had friends visit us at the fort and on this particular day, Bobby Alverson and Rudy Ealy were there with Bubba. I've heard varying stories about how the incident occurred. Seems the boys were playing "chop block chicken", one of many dumb games young boys play, like Mumbly-Peg or Stretch, either of which is like begging your pal to stick a sharp knife in your foot. Meanwhile, back at the woodyard, Bubba put his thumb on the chop block and dared Rudy to lay the hatchet to it.

Surely, Rudy thought Bubba would move his thumb before the hatchet fell. Nope. Rudy was fast, Bubba was slow. In later years, Bubba became a master cabinet builder but from that day on, he could only twiddle a thumb and a half.

His Dad buried the severed digit in the yard. He had to dig it up a couple of days later when Bubba said it felt like ants were crawling on the part of his thumb that was no longer there.

Uncle Jack dug it up and sure enough, ants. He re-interred it in a jar and Bubba started to get some relief. Phantom pain is real, I reckon.

The thumb story is still talked about today among those who lived in Dallas Mill Village at that time.

A couple of years later, me and Bubba went for the big money by getting Huntsville Times paper routes.

But that's another story for another time.

"So you hate your job and need a support group? It's called EVERYBODY and they meet at the bar!"

Drew Carey

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November is here again: pumpkins, bales of hay, colorful mums and the multicolored mountains adorned with gold, reds, yellows and greens.

So much to be thankful for; family, friends, freedom of speech—wishing good health to all. At the therapy center, I'm still doing work from a late June surgery. It should not have taken quite this long to heal. There are times that I think that I'm not making much progress, but then I look around and see so many others hurting much worse than I am. Then I'm thankful I'm no worse.

I decided to make a list of what are the most important things in my life. Why don't you think about the question and see what you come up with? I bet the answers will surprise you.

I watched a true-story movie on TV made in 1999 based on the book "Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man and Life's Greatest Lesson" by Mitch Albom. Jack Lemmon, who won an Emmy, starred as the wise old teacher dying of ALS. It was an inspiration and made me think about what is important in life. I recommend the movie or the book.

So ask yourself, "Am I living the life I want to live?" Why not try to do something nice for just one person each day? Later, you could do another one or two. But the most important lesson is about forgiveness. Forgive others unconditionally. Forgive yourself for what you did or didn't do in the past. Morrie Schwartz said something to the effect, "Without forgiveness, the past determines who you are." No matter how many days we have left, living in the present and enjoying each day will brighten your life, no matter how many more you have.

After spending all morning at the implant dentist, I remembered what I used to tell my kids, "Go brush your teeth, especially the ones you want to keep." Well, I thought I had practiced what I preached, but evidently NOT. Believe me, I will try harder,

I plan to make out the Thanksgiving menu this week and put many items in the freezer, so there isn't so much to do at the last minute. Anything to reduce the stress, especially when you expect twenty-five to thirty guests and family—hope they will offer to bring a dish.

The Auburn-Alabama football game is always a big November event in our family. It's Saturday, the 26th this year, right after Thanksgiving.

If you haven't had your flu shot, be sure and get yours. They are free with insurance at many places like Walmart, CVS and Walgreens. Just ask around at the drug stores nearest you. I got my Covid Delta variant booster as well.

Thought for the holidays, "Forgive, and live a better life." Until next time - keep a smile on your face and joy in your heart.

O'LE DAD'S BAR-B-Q

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Ribs (1/2 Slab)
Whole Chicken
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Sandwiches
Pork Sandwich
Turkey sandwich
Rib Sandwich

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Lewter Hardware - A Classy Farewell

by M. D. Smith, IV

Lu (short for Lustig), the cat, has taken his last stroll through the aisles of Lewter's Hardware store. So has Buffy, age 18, who both watched the throng of shoppers and well-wishers that crowded the store today. Their large parking lot was packed—overflow cars used the closed bank next door. Lewter's shut down for good at noon, Saturday, October 8, 2022.

One of the most asked questions of the staff was where the cats would live in the future. The answer is Don Lewter's daughter, Jincy, took them home today after the store closed.

As my wife and I walked in, I saw a young lady coming out of the store with an odd assortment of purchases. Her name was Emma Lucas. Among the new items she had was an obviously old hand-held sledgehammer. I asked her about the tool, and she said her brother, Fisher, who worked there from 2013 to 2015, used it doing the job he did, and it had sentimental value.

You could ask anyone there at the closing about their memories, and they all had stories that could fill a book.

Don Roden, who worked at Channel 31 with me many years ago, remembered meeting Don and saying his name was the same. Then they discovered they both had sons named Donnie and said they started up an instant relationship every time he came into the store after that. Don told me, "They always made me feel special, but I think they made every customer that came into their store feel the same way."

Another young man I met was Allen Jordan, age 22, who walked up to where I'd paused in the rear, far side of the store, to stroke Lu, hanging out where there were the least shoppers and noise. Allen took over petting Lu and told me of coming to Lewter's with his grandfather, Tommy Jordan, particularly at gardening time because they had everything he needed and were so friendly and helpful.

He particularly remembered how son Donnie Lewter (now deceased) knew so much about everything sold but was exceptionally well versed in the "nuts and bolts" hardware area of the business. Allen said he remembered coming as a very young boy and always enjoyed petting the cats.

During the last hour of business, the whole Lewter family was there. Don and Betty were near the checkout counter, dressed in yellow, with big smiles for friends and customers over the years. Same for daughter Jincy and son Mac (along with spouses), who mixed with the crowd along with staff, and it almost felt like a big reunion. In addition, for the last day of sales, all

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merchandise was 20% off as it had been the past month.

Store manager Caleb Hipp said an auction company was having an online event from October 25, taking online bids, until November 1. The link may stay up for a while if you are reading this past the first of the month.

Go to https://vanmassey.bidwrangler.com/ui/auctions/88886.

I wondered about the inventory of small items for auction, and Caleb said he had no idea how they'd market all the small items. He said the one thing he would not miss was the end-of-year inventory they always had to do on the store's tens of thousands of items. He remembered days and days of filling up yellow legal pads with items. I have no idea who summarized all that material.

The concluding hour from 11 to 12 was a picnic-style lunch in the covered area attached to the store by the parking lot with plenty of great spare ribs, all the fixings, and several desserts, including a cake they had made saying, "Thank You for 94 years of Serving You."

A colossal canvas banner outside the store said, "Thanks Huntsville for 94 years of Serving You." What a classy business to do so much to thank all its customers in this way. All visitors were invited to get on a stepstool and sign a message that the Lewter family would keep in memory of the closing day.

Publisher Cathey Carney put her message there, "Will Love You Always. Old Huntsville Magazine." Mrs. Carney had to replenish the honor box often that contained the October issue of OHM as it was in hot demand for a memory magazine featuring Lewter's on the front page.

There was even a chalk message written on the parking lot asphalt thanking the business for their caring customer service and help over the years. It said, "Goodbye, Good luck and God bless! Thank you 4 being here 4 so long 4 us." And a heart was drawn below the message.

The store lights began to turn off, one room at a time, starting at the rear of the store, as noon approached. Shoppers gradually moved toward the checkout area and side door into the parking lot. Lewter's had run out of the familiar brown paper sacks by then, but shoppers didn't care, they were carrying their treasures with them.

Final purchases concluded, the doors closed and locked at 12:25, and Don and Betty Lewter left the store.

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Up, Up, and Away (1968)

by Bill Alkire

The weather was great for the first week in October of 1968. The trees were showing off their brilliant colors of red, orange, yellow and variegated leaves. Nature was truly showing off for all the visitors here to the mountains.

The festival had huge crowds, setting attendance records. The main parade on Saturday was the largest in the state's history. Of particular interest to me was the quantity and quality of the antique vehicles. There were beautiful vintage Fords, Chrysler, General Motors and other cars from the 1920s to the early 1960s.

An air show was scheduled for Sunday at the regional airport. My father-in-law owned a Cessna 172 Skyhawk, and his friend Bill had a Cessna 182. Both men had been friends since their CCC Camp days. Bill had learned to fly with the Army Air Corps.

A group was gathered around the flight control tower in a VIP setting to watch the air show. The show was going well. Vintage aircraft of single and bi-wing design were outstanding, leaving the crowd mesmerized. Midway through the show a distress call came to the tower. The controller brought all the aircraft that were in the air in for a landing. The main runway was cleared. The fire department was already on hand and was alerted as well as the emergency squad. The situation was frightening.

The call came from a pilot flying a Cessna 172 Skyhawk with four adults on board; the pilot, his wife, the wife's brother and his wife. The front axle had been damaged during a takeoff a few hours before. The pilot ran over some debris on the runway and a tire had gone flat. The pilot had attempted to circle and land however on his approach to landing the flat tire came apart taking the flaring skirt with it leaving just the metal support leg. He had been forced to initiate ascension to avoid crashing.

1963 Cessna 172 Skyhawk

The pilot of the Cessna was informed of the ground situation and instructed to abort as much fuel as possible and wait further instruction. The seasoned pilots all got together and began brainstorming solutions. Bill had an idea. He had never seen his idea personally, but he had heard stories of what he suggested.

He suggested that he would take his 1947 Willys Overland Station Wagon, drive down the runway and the pilot could drop the overhead wing on top of the vehicles. The Willys would function as a landing gear. It was a dangerous maneuver. Chances of the four on board crash landing and surviving were not good. Bill got on the phone and talked to the pilot.

They discussed what needed to happen and what

"People are really excited about all the new technology in phones, but no one has caught up with the skill of using their turn signals when they drive."

Keith Able, Scottsboro

Thank You!!

If you didn't know it, you are keeping this magazine going. Without our advertisers, readers and writers, we would not be able to stay in business. When our readers pay $2 for an issue, that money goes towards our printing cost.

It's been 32 years now full of great stories. There are just a few of us who are putting this magazine together. We appreciate every call we get from you, encouraging us to keep publishing!

We need your family memories and stories more than ever, keep sending them. We Appreciate You more than you know.

could go wrong. Bill and the pilot were well coordinated. Bill drove the Willys to the end of runway and got in position. The Cessna made its approach. The pilot waved Bill off and pulled back in position. The approach was initiated once more. Bill went quicker down the runway. The Cessna was coming in too fast. They had to abort a second time. Bill got in position again and this time the approach was better. Bill accelerated. The Cessna was coming in slower. Bill listened to the pilot and the tower on the portable radio he had placed on the front seat.

The Cessna's wing touched the top of the Willys. The chassis began to squeak and groan with the weight. Soon the Cessna and the Willys became one and the two began to slow. Smoke was coming from the rear of the Willys. A cheer could be heard from the crowd. Emergency vehicles arrived; the Cessna passengers exited the aircraft. Bill opened the Willys door got out and raised the hood.

The engine did not smell right and had quit running. Attempts to restart the Willys was futile. The Willys sustained stress damage to the body that could not be repaired. The top had caved in, the front axle was bent, the frame was twisted, the rear glass had broken, several wheel lugs had snapped off, and the motor was burned up from being revved so high.

The two couples were ushered to the tower. Bill got a standing ovation from the crowd everyone hugged the passengers and congratulated Bill.

The air show continued. All turned out well from clear, smart thinking.

1947 Willys Overland Station Wagon

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Heard On the Street

by ***Cathey Carney***

We received so many calls for the little hidden paintbrush that actually wasn't so hidden. The one I wanted you to find was on page 23 in the White Sock painting ad - there were two there actually. The reader who called first was **Sue Cross** of West Virginia. She has known one of our regular writers, **Bill Alkire**, for years and he's like a brother to her. So she was our first winner.

Then **Linda Scates** called and she found one I would have never found - look on the very first page of the Oct issue - see the Lewter Hardware sign on the building? Look over the R in Hardware and what do you see - it looks very much like a paintbrush. So, since Lewter's has recently closed, and Linda has such great eyes, she was my 2nd hidden brush winner. That was a real surprise to me, I didn't see that one til she pointed it out. Linda and her sweetie **Jim** have been married for 69 years, are Huntsville residents and have been reading Old Huntsville for years trying to win. Congratulations to both Linda and Sue - you just won $50 subscriptions for another year of great reading.

The winner of the Photo of the Month for October was **Billy Gossett**. He lives in Gurley and is retired from Wyle Labs where he worked for 30 years. He loves history and recognized the little guy in the photo as **Austin Miller**, of Ryland. The Miller family including **Austin, Beirne and Malcolm** have written some of the best stories for Old Huntsville over the years. Congratulations Billy!

In honor of **Lewter's** and one of the sweet store cats **Lu**, I have hidden a tiny photo of Lu's face somewhere in this issue. Just a tiny cat face. If you are the first to find him, call me and you win a free year's subscription!

I heard a good kitchen tip from **Sam Keith** recently - under your kitchen sink is the elbow portion that is the "trap". It has a tendency to collect food when water goes down the drain, so every once in a while fill your sink with warm water, add a little salt and let it drain. Really clears out that trap.

Billy Lawrence wants to wish his sweet sister a Happy Birthday. **Linda Worley** of Huntsville is his sister and he loves her so much, and wants her to have a happy and fun day!

Many remember playing sports at the **Goldsmith Schiffman Field** just west of Pratt Avenue. There is a group of people who are very interested in preserving this 1934 field and making it accessible for the community to use it in the future for more than just sports. Friends of Goldsmith Schiffman Field has been formed on Facebook - be sure and check it out and join up! We sure don't want to lose another important historic site.

For those of us who can't get rid of anything and tend to collect too much stuff that our kids will have to deal with one day - here's what some are doing to find success. Take one closet or room at a time, and go thru it all. 3 piles - **Give away, Throw away, Keep**. If it still fits and you love it, keep it. If it's a knicknack and gives you joy, keep it. Otherwise donate it so others can get some fun out of it. If there are items that aren't good enough to donate, just throw away. Remember that many of the animal rescue agencies can use old blankets, sheets, towels, even old furniture. Many have thrift stores you can give to and all the money goes to helping the pets. Best of all, you are doing something positive for you and your family and you need to be sure to reward yourself!

We wanted to send love and condolences to **Gale Nichols** in the loss of her son, **Stacy Dean Nichols** on Oct. 4. He was only 56 and Gale is heartbroken. He

Photo of The Month

The first person to correctly identify the youngster below wins a one-year subscription to "Old Huntsville"

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served his country in the Coast Guard and his burial with military honors will be in St. Louis, MO. Losing a loved one is so hard but losing a child is unimaginable, no matter the age.

Pauline Means Neely celebrated her 90th birthday recently on Sep. 25. Many may remember her as the owner and operator of the Sno-White on Whitesburg Drive. Pauline's kids are: **Brenda Neely, Bobby Neely, Linda McKinney and Paula Yerby**. They all celebrated her big day with her and we understand it was quite the party! Happy Birthday Pauline!

Once you met **Stephen Burcham**, you wouldn't forget him. He was outgoing, funny, brilliant, a people person and a loving husband, dad and granddad. Steve was just 60 when he passed away on September 16, 2022. He was born in Huntsville and graduated from Grissom High School in 1980. Later, he married his high school sweetheart, **Cindy Eyestone.** Steve went on to earn his degree in Electrical Engineering from University of Alabama-Huntsville and later earned his MBA from Auburn University. One of the last things he said was "War Damn Eagle" to the room of family, friends and nurses at UAB Hospital. Steve worked for 20 years at Chrysler and then eventually retired from Digium as their Vice President of Operations.

He was a tireless volunteer for such agencies as CASA, Habitat for Humanity, mission trips with his daughters, Youth group at Asbury Church of Madison, YMCA and others. He was organized and a leader and made things happen if he was involved.

After receiving a heart transplant in 2012 he was determined to be out of the hospital faster than any of the staff there had ever seen and he succeeded. A few short months later he even ran a 5K, and his nurses at UAB still use him as an example to encourage new post-transplant recipients.

Steve is survived by his wife of 37 years, **Cindy**, and his three daughters, **Lindsey** and **Jay Riffel** of Houston, TX, **Brooke Burcham** of St. Louis, MO, and **Anna and Jake Morris** of Atlanta, GA, two granddaughters, **Samantha** and **Maisie** and one grandson on the way. He will be forever loved.

A very Happy Birthday to **Bill Arnold** of Scottsboro who just turned 88 on Sep. 30th. He's been reading about local history for many years and we hope he partied in style!

Faith and **Nolan Blackhurst** are the parents of sweet baby girl **Scout.** They live in Northern California but the proud great grandma of **Scout** is **Chery Tribble** of Marietta, GA who is our primo editor. Scout turned 1 on Oct. 16, and her Mom Faith turned 30 same day. Happy Birthday to the sweet family!

Dale Rhoades recently moved from her home in Old Town and wrote to say she misses it every day. "You never really leave a place you love. Part of it you take with you, leaving a part of you behind." (anon). We miss you too Dale!

The **2022 Veterans Day Parade** will be held Nov. 11 at 11am downtown - there are always big crowds and it's fun for kids and adults alike. Our Veterans need to be honored every day but this is an important event highlighting those who put their lives on the line for us.

I wish you a warm and happy Thanksgiving with your family and friends. Remember your friends and neighbors who may not have anyone to celebrate with, and try to do something nice for them. Not everyone looks upon the holiday season as a time to celebrate.

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Beth Frederick, Athens

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Karen Maroon's Favorites

Overnight Coffee Cake

3/4 c. softened unsalted butter
1 c. sugar (or substitute)
2 eggs
2 c. plain flour
1 t. baking soda
1 t. ground nutmeg
1/2 t. salt
1 c. sour cream
Topping:
3/4 c. brown sugar
1/2 c. chopped pecans
1 t. ground cinnamon
Glaze:
1-1/2 c. powdered sugar
3 T. milk

In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar, add eggs and beat well. Combine flour, soda, nutmeg and salt in a smaller bowl and add it to the creamed mixture, alternating with the sour cream. Pour into a 13x9" baking dish. Combine brown sugar, pecans and cinnamon and sprinkle this over the cake mixture. Cover all and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, bake at 350 uncovered for 35-40 minutes and a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool on wire rack for 10 minutes. Combine the powdered sugar and milk and drizzle over the cake. Serve warm and there won't be any leftover!

White Chocolate Pretzels

1-8 oz. pkg. white chocolate melted in double boiler
3 c. miniature pretzels or broken pretzel sticks
2 c. salted peanuts

Mix together and spread on parchment paper-lined cookie sheet.

Let cool and break into pieces. The sweet & salty taste is amazing.

Baked Chicken Salad

3 c. cooked, cubed chicken (can use rotisserie chicken)
1-1/2 c. diced celery or broccoli
3/4 c. slivered almonds
16-oz. can sliced water chestnuts
1/2 t. salt & pepper
Paprika to taste
1/2 c. chopped onion
3 t. fresh lemon juice
1 can undiluted cream of mushroom soup
3/4 c. grated sharp Cheddar cheese
1-1/2 c. crushed potato chips

Combine all ingredients except cheese and chips in a greased 9x13" casserole.

Sprinkle cheese and chips on top. Bake in preheated 325 degree oven for 45 minutes, and top is lightly browned.

Easy and delicious to serve at home and bring to parties.

Herb Cheese Spread

2 - 8 oz. pkgs. softened cream cheese
1/4 c. grated Parmesan cheese
2 T. dry white wine
2 T. finely chopped parsley
1 T. chopped green onion
1 t. fresh lemon juice
1/8 t. black pepper

Mix ingredients, til well blended. Chill, serve with crackers. Makes 2 cups. This can easily be doubled to serve at a party.

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Hash Brown Casserole

1-32 oz. pkg. frozen shredded hash browns, thawed
2 cans undiluted potato soup
2 - 8 oz. cartons sour cream
2 c. shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
3/4 c. grated Parmesan
3 T. fresh chopped chives
1 T. fresh chopped flat-leaf parsley

Combine all ingredients well, spoon into greased 9x13" baking dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

Baked Beans with Pineapple

4-16 oz. cans pork 'n beans
1-20 oz. can crushed pineapple, drained
1 c. molasses
1 c. BBQ sauce
2 T. mustard
5 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
1-6 oz. can French-fried onion rings, crushed.
Salt & Pepper to taste

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl mix together beans, pineapple, molasses, BBQ sauce, mustard, part of the bacon and 1/3 of the onions. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Pour mixture into a 9x13" casserole dish and sprinkle with remaining crushed onions and bacon on top. Bake for one hour and beans are brown and bubbling. Serve warm.

Potato Sausage Dressing

1 lb. bulk sausage
1 c. chopped onion
3/4 c. finely chopped celery
1 t. poultry seasoning
Packaged instant mashed potatoes - enough for 8 servings
2 eggs

Cook the sausage, onion and celery til meat is browned, then drain. Stir in the poultry seasoning and 1/4 teaspoonful black pepper.

Prepare potatoes following the package directions, but reduce salt to 1/2 teaspoon. Beat in eggs. Stir in the meat mixture.

Bake, covered, in a 2 quart casserole at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. This will make 6 cups.

You can chop the onion and celery in advance, cook the sausage earlier also to save time. Will save you time for sure.

Of course you can boil your potatoes for that homestyle taste but make sure you have 8 servings.

Easy Shrimp Dip

1 can shrimp, chopped
3 T. mayonnaise
1 - 8 oz. block cream cheese
1 T. lemon juice
1 cup shredded sharp cheddar

Mix all ingredients, blend well and bake in oven for 20 minutes at 350 degrees. Can easily be doubled or tripled without affecting the taste or texture. Have made this for many parties down through the years and the bowl is always scraped clean.

Apricot Pecan Flat Bread

1 pkg. refrigerated crescent rolls
1/2 cup apricot jam (can use regular or sugar free)
2 T. butter
1 cup chopped pecans
1 cup crumbled Gorgonzola cheese
1 T. chopped fresh thyme

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Unwrap rolls but do not separate. Press into a rectangular crust on a baking sheet. Mix jam with butter, spread over crust. Sprinkle with pecans and cheese. Bake for 13 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Top with thyme. Cut into squares or strips.

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A Veterans Day Story

by Bill Wright

It was October but already there was a winter chill in the air, Winters come early in Korea, and they are very severe. I had spent one winter in Korea and hoping not to spend a second one there.

I was assigned to a machine gun squad in a front-line Infantry Regiment. It had only taken ten days when I initially served on the front-line to become a combat decorated Soldier of the Korean War. I was 20 years old.

I had been away from home for almost 2 years and images of what some of my family members looked like were beginning to fade. We were in a reserve area behind the frontlines and only a few days before returning to the front lines when I received Army orders to return to the United States.

The war was over for me. I was leaving Korea but taking a lot of memories of that country with me.

Other departing Soldiers and I were taken to a beach area where a Landing Craft boat awaited to take us to a Transport Ship docked in deeper water. We were told to remove all weapons, ammunition and helmets: lay them on the ground and then load into the Landing Craft boat. It was at that moment I truly felt I was going home.

We were taken to Japan for physicals and paperwork processing. We were given speeches about making the Army a career, become an Officer, see the world. I declined all offers. The ship trip back to the United States would take 14 days. They would be 14 long and boring days. After 14 days at sea our ship was scheduled to dock at San Francisco at daylight. Many Soldiers had lined the decks hours in advance of dawn to get an early glimpse of their homeland.

As our ship neared the San Francisco docks a military band began playing, "California Here I Come". After that a young lady would sing several patriotic songs. Once the ship came to a complete stop at the docks an Army Officer gave a speech, welcoming us back home and thanking us for our service in the Far East. It was an impressive ceremony. We then loaded into Ferry Boats and taken to a nearby Army base where we would be reassigned to various Army bases. I was reassigned to the 101st Airborne Division located at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky, pending a discharge from the Army.

The passenger train ride from California to Kentucky was a time of three enjoyable days. As the troop passenger train traveled through the wide-open land of the western states and small towns, the spectacular scenery was a welcome contrast to war-torn Korea. It was great being back in America.

At Camp Breckinridge I had few duties, so I spent lot of time looking out the barracks windows watching and laughing at recruits make wrong turns learning to do close-order drills. Two years earlier I probably looked like them. The Army Discharge Ceremony was a lot like a high school graduation. We were called up front one at a time. An Army Captain would smile, shake our hand and thank us for our service to the United States Army, while handing us discharge papers. It was the first time I had seen an Army Captain smile. I walked out of the auditorium with discharge papers in my hand and cash money in my pocket. I had no idea or plan how I would get to my hometown. I was twenty-one years old. Soon I saw a Soldier hawking rides to Nashville for $5. I told him I would

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take a ride to the train station. When I arrived at the train station, I learned the only daily train to my hometown would leave in two hours and would arrive in my hometown at 2 a.m. the next morning. I telephoned home and told my sixteen-year-old brother I was corning home and would arrive by passenger train at 2 a.m. the next morning and suggested no one meet me because of the 2 a.m. arrival time. I would take a taxi home. Initially, he did not believe it was me calling because he said I sounded like one of those "Yankees."

When the passenger train left Nashville the passenger coach I was seated in was full and noisy with mostly college students going home for the weekend. They were all about my age. Many hours later as the passenger train neared my hometown there was only myself and an older couple seated at the opposite end of the coach. It was a quiet time—a time to reflect back upon my experiences of the last two years. It was also time to think of my future and what path I would follow as I re-entered civilian life.

It was nearing 2 a.m. and the passenger train was slowing its speed as it approached my hometown. As the train moved very slowly through the downtown area and approached the train station, I was now hoping someone would meet me although I had told my brother I would take a taxi home. I would not be disappointed. Standing on the railroad station platform were my mother, father, two brothers, a sister-in-law and five-year-old nephew. It was great to be back home.

"I have no problem with friends asking for money. I love a good laugh as much as anyone."

Maxine

"I put my scale in the bathroom corner and that's where the little liar will stay until it apologizes."

Pat Riley, Huntsville

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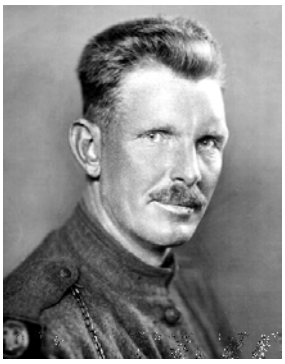
by Iolanda Hicks



I really didn't have a title for this short story so since Sgt. York was the reason I am writing it, the story title seems appropriate. Sgt. York was a young man born in Pall Mall, TN in 1887. He grew up in a family of farming and poverty. The country boy could shoot and was especially good at shooting turkeys which has a lot to do with his war activities in a big way. He went from being a poor country boy to being one of our country's most decorated World War I heroes being awarded the Medal of Honor. The movie starring Gary Cooper, that was about this hero, got me interested in this Tennessee boy. After finding out there was a park in Tennessee named after him, I had to check it out!

My hubby was all for a short trip since he has always been a military buff and was very familiar with Sgt. York's history. We traveled the backroads from Huntsville and arrived in a small town of Jamestown, Tennessee, about four hours or so from our home. We stayed at a 1950s motel run by the daughter of the original owners of that motel. I felt like I had known the folks I met, during our two day stay, my whole life. It was like I had come home.

The morning after our arrival in this quaint country town, we headed for the Sgt. York State Park, about 20 minutes away from the motel. We had an appointment for a 45 minute tour of the York home at 11:00 am. It was such an interesting tour with the guide not only telling us about the house but also tidbits about Sgt. York and his family.

When Alvin York returned from the war as a hero, his home town and the Nashville Rotary Club were so proud of him that they collected enough money to pay off his 400 acre farm and built him and his new wife Gracie a house. The couple had 10 children with 7 to live and spent several years of happiness on the farm. In 1954, Alvin, suffering from several earlier strokes and pneumonia, was confined to bed and remained an invalid until he died in 1964. Most of the farm, other than some acreage put aside for the family, was left to the State of Tennessee after Gracie's death, to become a park. The house also became a part of the State's bequest.

After our tour ended we went by the cemetery and found the York family grave sites and then took a ride through the countryside outside of the town. We stopped at the FORBUS Grocery Store that had been established in 1892. It was a neat store with a large wooden Indian on it's rickety front porch, greeting customers. There were those tiny wax coke looking bottles, filled with colorful sweet liquid, candy cigarettes and those delicious fake lipstick tubes. Lordy! Did the candy counter bring back childhood memories or what? Oh yes!!

We took a different way home after our short adventure. It took us a little longer but it was a pleasant ride. Just an added bit of information that relates to our short trip: David (hubby) is on staff and has volunteered at the Huntsville Veteran's Museum located at the old Huntsville Airport off Airport Road. He told me that one of Sgt. York's grandsons lives in Huntsville and that he had donated one of his grandfather's uniforms from WWI to the museum. It is there at the museum, under glass and protected.

I am so proud of our country and all the people who have made it so. We are very blessed to have the privilege to be able to live free and travel through this beautiful land. It humbles me when I read about all those heroes. I am so thankful to be able to travel to those places where these heroes lived ordinary lives, until the time they were called on to do extraordinary things. Sgt. Alvin C. York was one of those special people.

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Signs of a Severe Winter

It's a bit early to think about winter, but here are a few signs you should be on the lookout for, that foretell of a severe winter:

The squirrels seem busier than ever, their tails are very bushy and they begin to gather nuts earlier than usual.

Fur or hair on dogs, mules, horses, cats and cows is thicker than usual. The bark on trees is thicker.

Birds huddle on the ground, and eat up all the berries early. Your holly and dogwood trees have more berries than usual. Hickory nuts have a very heavy shell.

When you see butterflies gathering in bunches in the air, winter is coming early.

Woolly worms are everywhere, you see them before the first frost. Also, if the worms have a very heavy coat and the black band on their backs are very wide, it will be severe winter.

If we have a frost before November 23, it will be a bad winter.

Two frosts and a lot of rain mean a bad winter is very near.

Pine cones open early.

Laurel leaves are rolling up.

Wild hogs gather sticks, straw and shucks to make a bed.

The darker green the grass is in the summer, the colder the winter will be.

Sweet potatoes have a tougher skin.

Raccoons with thick tails and bright bands.

Mice chewing furiously to get into your home.

The early arrival of crickets on the hearth.

Spiders spinning larger-than-usual webs and entering the house in great numbers.

Pigs gathering sticks.

Ants marching in a line rather than meandering.

Early seclusion of bees within the hive.

Unusual abundance of acorns.

Squirrels gathering nuts early to fortify against a hard winter.

Frequent halos or rings around the sun or moon forecasts numerous snowfalls.

The early departure of geese and ducks.

The early migration of the monarch butterfly.

Thick hair on the nape of a cow's neck.

"Men are brave enough to go to war, but not brave enough to get a bikini wax."

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Huntsville Area National Guard in the Korean War: Trains, Ships and Rumors

By Giles Hollingsworth

By the end of December (1950) we were as ready as we would ever be, which would never be "gung ho" ready, but still ready enough to leave Ft. Campbell for parts unknown, probably Korea. In fact, we pretty well knew it was Korea. But some hoped we had an ace in the hole in Senator John Sparkman, so rumors reared their wistful but deceitful heads. We learned that we were to board a troop train on or about January 3, 1951, a train bound for Seattle, but, "After all," said the rumormongers, "that's on the way to Alaska, and John Sparkman is influential enough to see that we go there instead of Korea."

Another rumor was that if Korea was our assignment it would only be for a year. We felt there was substance to that rumor.

Our departure time frame had been known to us since early December, and that's when reality simply claimed its rightful place, deepening concerns and emotions, especially in those we were leaving. And precious moments became even more precious when they became limited. It never occurred to me that I exploited that situation, but I probably did. I, along with other guys with girlfriends, because those girls were concerned with our safety, and our soon-to-be absence made their hearts grow fonder. We wanted that fondness, or love, to be deep enough to last for at least a year of absence. So we shed our inhibitions and amazed even ourselves in our ability to speak words of love and to secure commitments to wait, commitments that would be extremely hard to keep.

The other aspect of our leaving was our families, where the occasion was more somber and love was already strong enough to last through a hundred wars, without a word being spoken. But we did manage to speak some words, mainly words of optimism, like "a year will pass before you know it". And as December shrank, emotions deepened. The Christmas gifts to and from us that December were surely the most precious ones we had ever given or received. When we left Huntsville on that last return trip to camp, the town was a sea of tears; probably every mother and wife cried openly. Likely most fathers managed to hide their tears. Of course I, like all the other guys, had to be stoic to show our optimism.

But from what I write, you know how I felt, and how the other guys felt. But since we had to leave, we left.

By 1950 America's love affair with trains had been going on for well over a hundred years. Movie makers took us inside luxurious passenger cars, along the roofs where heroes chased bad guys, and even underneath where hobos sometime rode. And there were tons of train songs, like "Wabash Cannon Ball", "Casey Jones", and "Chattanooga Choo-Choo". But to most of us they were just movies and songs, not part of our near-future. Now here we were on January 3, boarding one of the world's finest trains, for a 2400 mile trip across most of this country. This was fantastic! If I had ever heard the word back then I would have called it "surreal". In fact it was exciting enough to help us get past the heartbreak of leaving.

The weather was cold but the plush passenger car was warm. The

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seats were spacious and had a just-right blend of firmness and softness. Our meals, in the dining car no less, were pre-ordered, but the food was delicious! We slept in Pullman cars, with our beds made up by exceptionally nice porters, who treated us like royalty. We had two days and nights of leisure...no reveille, no work details, nothing to do but sit back and enjoy the scenery and each other's company.

That company, in my car, included Jack Gold (or Golden), Delano Ivy, Jerry Griggs, J.D. Smith, C.R. Williamson, Warrant Officer Jim Coward, and two very young guys whose first names I don't remember, Powell and Stogner (probably Jimmy or William). Also others whose names I don't remember.

There was a lot of gin rummy and penny-ante poker played on that trip. But most of us never tired of the scenery, so we stayed wide-eyed, and we gazed. I found it hard to believe that I was seeing places like Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and later, seemingly hundreds of snow-covered hills in Montana. And winding through the mountains of Washington was breath-taking.

Backing up a bit I have to tell about the unlikely formation of a musical trio on the first day out. I think it was J.D. Smith's initiative. He, Jerry Griggs and I sang mostly Sons of the Pioneers songs, and we actually sounded pretty good judging from the applause we got. We were flattered and we thoroughly enjoyed it.

Seattle was bleak. It was about as cold as a November day back home, and of course it was rainy. But it was just a stop-over, so we took it in stride, and after a couple of days there we boarded the Marine Phoenix, a troop transport ship, and embarked on another imagination-stretching trip, across the world's widest ocean, the Pacific. We sailed at nightfall, so watching the harbor lights fade as we moved out was melodramatic for me, mainly because of the song, "Harbor Lights", and it just had to be the same for anyone else who had ever heard the song, a haunting World War II creation.

On the first day out we got the word that we were going to Korea. So the rumor was dispelled.

An ocean voyage is undeniably an adventure, but our train trip and our sea crossing are a study in opposites. Now we slept in the hold, below deck, in bunks suspended from the ceiling, three deep. The chow was okay, but we had to hold fast to our trays to keep them from sliding away from us as the ship tossed from side to side. We showered with salt water, which is a sworn enemy of soap (won't let it lather). Then the inevitable sea sickness, and the chow is no longer okay, and neither is anything else. But I do have to say that once you get past that, and earn your sea legs, it is thrilling to watch the flying fishes, and to marvel at the vastness of the ocean.

There were other advantages: we sailed close enough to Hawaii to at least see it; the Navy provided three or four good movies, open air, on deck; and some of our guys from the 1092nd Battalion gave super music performances.

After about three weeks at sea we docked at Yokohama, Japan. No shore leave, which was disappointing, but we were only there for a few hours. Then on to Pusan, Korea, where we disembarked the next day, February 9, 1951.

(Please contact me, through Old Huntsville Magazine, if you had a relative in these North Alabama National Guard units that went to Korea in 1951: The 1169th Combat Engr. Grp, the 151st and 1343rd Combat Engr. Battalions. I want to mention every one of them in this series of articles).

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The Ford Motor Company views its situation today less with pride in great achievement than with sincere and sober realization of new and larger opportunities for service to mankind.

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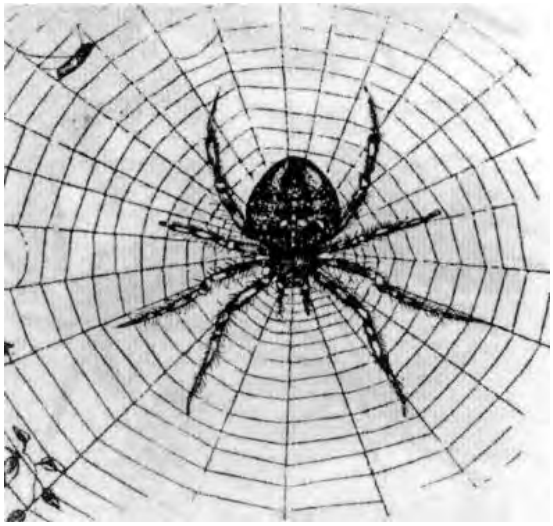
Learn From the Past

by Gerald W. Alvis, the Poet of Greenlawn



Most mornings our dog Kona keeps us safe from the sprinkler monsters that emerge from the earth to challenge her. She runs to each one chomping at the water till it subsides into the ground. She then prances triumphantly to shake herself dry, always next to me! Why can't she do that out there? I asked my wife, and we both remained puzzled, but it got me thinking. So today, I'll let you a little inside my thought process.

She also turns around several times before she lays down. I'm sure you've seen this behavior as well. Where did she learn this?

This got me pondering a spider web I saw earlier. He didn't go to spider engineering school, but the webs they build are similar and, from my observations, effective. How does it know? An infant newly born will seek nourishment and comfort by turning its head toward the finger that touches its cheek.

Instinct is the phrase we use, which to me, has almost a mystical tone. I call it hard wiring or programming, a built-in set of instructions in our DNA. So, can we learn stuff and pass it on genetically? I think so, but if we can learn, can we unlearn, and this isn't a Yoda statement.

Salmon, hummingbirds, geese and caribou follow the routes of their ancestors. They do it instinctively, and I have problems locating things with GPS. We are supposedly of higher intelligence, but have we forgotten what they take for granted?

Is my love for the sea due to Norwegian blood in my veins, or is this a romanticist's view? Is my longing for God due to several ministers in my family from long ago that I've never met? Did I serve in the military because my ancestors did? Were these things passed down to me genetically? So, what was my conclusion? Yes, I believe traits and even talents are passed on to each new generation. But that's not why I write.

Even if you don't have religious beliefs, if this is true, then a part of us lives on forever! Not just the physical, but the passion or skill we lived and developed. It seems we have influence in life and even after we are gone. So be brave, go on that adventure, and laugh! I don't know why we make that strange noise either, but it's usually a consequence of joy! Let's pass that on as well!

It brought new meaning to the phrase or quote in a movie 20 years ago. "What we do in life echoes in eternity"!

I wonder about what is out there, and it isn't about what I can learn, there is plenty of that, but what could I relearn. Yea, I'm going to need more coffee!

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A Kid in the Country

by Clarence Golson

The Bottom, as I mentioned before in a previous story, did have one adventure in my memory. Some of the pregnant cows didn't come to the regular feeding area so Daddy loaded a ton or so of range pellets, some to be fed that day and some to be stored. Then he headed for the Bottom. He realized the ground was damp and tried to avoid the real muddy places. But he missed this one and the truck was stuck. While trying to get free, the muffler heated up and came in contact with the sage grass and it ignited. Daddy grabbed me and put me down safely away from the truck and went back to fight the fire with a tarpaulin. All was saved and one of my brothers walked to the house to bring the tractor to pull the truck free. Once free, Daddy found the cows and put some pellets out for them.

On the way to the Bottom on another day, a branch to the creek had to be crossed, there was a bridge that was about 6 feet or more above the shallow water but it was old and we always used caution when crossing it. This time the truck was loaded too heavily and when the rear wheels get about mid-way the bridge, it gave way. Daddy, one of the farm hands and I were all of a sudden, looking up at the sky. I have a snapshot memory of the farm hand putting me on his shoulder and walking about a half mile back the the house. I never knew how the truck as removed from the branch but I do remember Daddy building a new bridge.

Back then, flocks of black birds could be seen streaming from one horizon to the other. They had traditional roosting areas closer to the city. The city fathers saw the birds and their droppings as a health threat. For several years on freezing nights, when the birds were on the roost, the city fathers would spray the birds with soapy water, which dissolved the protective oil on their feathers. The birds were soaked and they died of exposure. This ended the abundant flocks of black birds.

Cows will eat anything, no matter how it tastes. The "night pasture", right by the house, by midsummer, had a fine crop of bitter weed and if a cow ate too many, the bitter taste came through into the milk. We couldn't sell the milk and we couldn't drink it. Even the butter made from it tasted bitter. Daddy gave me a nickel for every Red flyer wagon, piled high. I pulled many wagons full but it never seemed to make a dent in the bitter weeds. Usually, when it got too plentiful, one of my brothers was selected to mow them. Daddy really hated pouring the bitter milk down the drain.

The dairy provided our family with a lot of food. Mama would can tomatoes, green beans, black-eyed peas. Onion and peppers would keep without canning. We had chickens, pigs and beef. Corn could be canned whole grain and cream style, even frozen on the cob. Some of the corn dried on the cob, we shelled that and had it ground into meal and grits. As you can see, we didn't buy as many groceries as city folk did. But Mama made a BUNCH of biscuits every morning so we bought a lot of flour.

Our house was old, 10 foot ceilings, one fire place, I never saw it used. It had three bedrooms and one bathroom which looked like it was added after the original build. It rested on concrete blocks and was closed in on three sides. I played there with wooden blocks for trucks and cars, I smoothed out roads between buildings, more blocks or just a pile of dirt.

When storms would come in from the south, air pressure would build under the house and lift the linoleum covering the floors, that would lift the beds. My brothers were afraid of the house in storms and rode them out in the truck. More to come.

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Time Has Passed and Left Me Behind!

by Ernestine Moody

Wow, about 70 years ago when I was absorbed in digesting math class in our humble school, I considered myself as somewhat of a master of that art. I was able to add, subtract and multiply by using my small fingers as a tool.

I actually remember my dad using oranges to teach me the concept of "taking away," or subtracting. It took awhile, but finally one day, happily, it all came together. Things went smoothly for a few years, but later in my education, I was introduced to Algebra II!

Algebra I had been fun. I simply memorized the method of handling each equation. However when I had to analyze the problem and decide how it should be solved, I was lost! Out of frustration I approached my teacher. We discussed the issue. I was elated when I was told that Algebra II, and Calculus, were not required as a prerequisite for all colleges.

Therefore, I avoided the Math Curriculum as if it were a contagious disease! I felt comfortable with my amount of knowledge. I did not realize what the future had planned for this peaceful world.

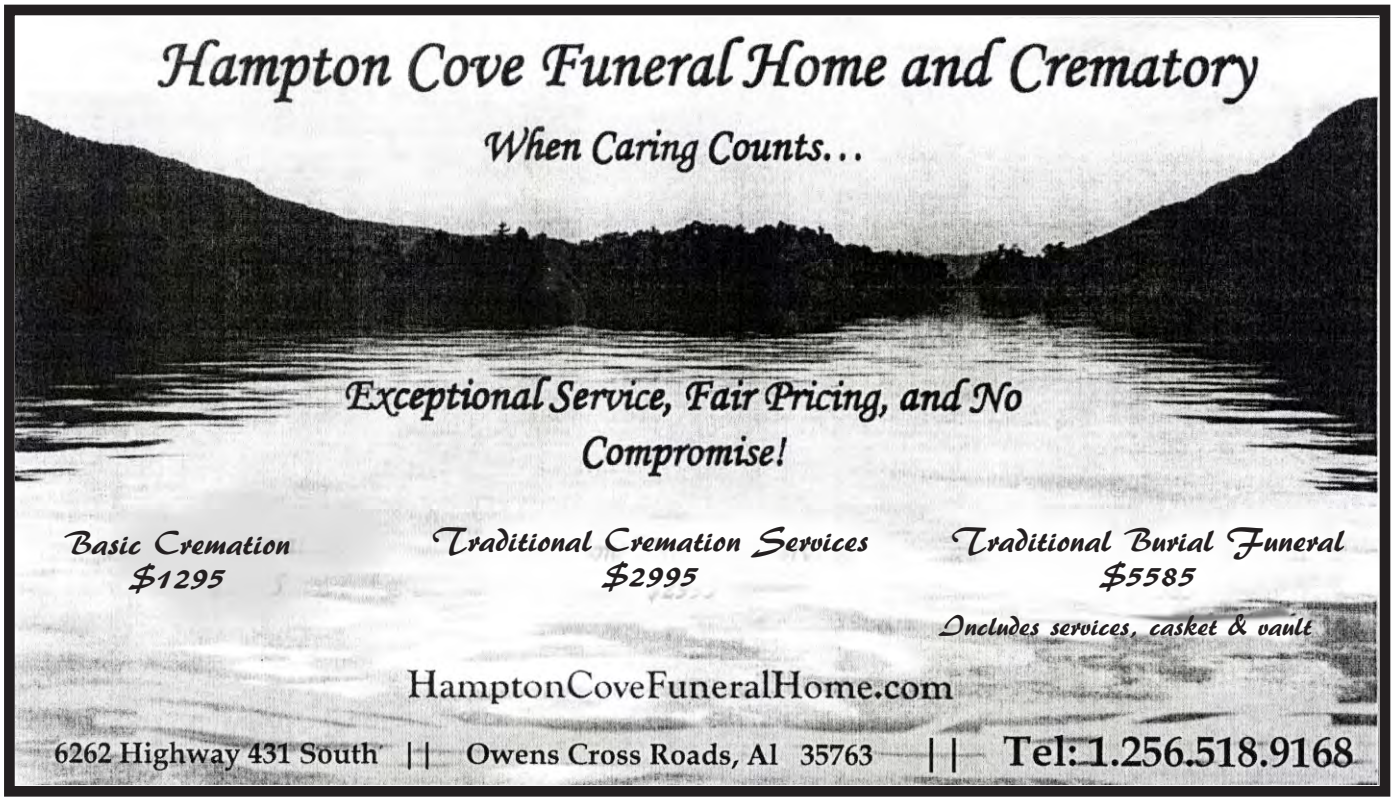
Suddenly we heard a new word, COMPUTERS! It became the central thought in many minds. My husband, Tom, like many others in the field of science, had found a new wonderful device that could fulfill many of his needs as a college professor. Society was introduced to electronic items, iPads, Apple devices, etc. Why, I am still amazed when I walk into an Apple Store and I see small children utilizing their sample merchandise.

Tom, my two sons, five grandkids, "it took a village," and an abundance of patience, have brought me to this level of computer knowledge. As long as no unusual problems arise, and I can use my simplified memorized method of operation, I can type a letter for email.

I again found that I had reached a comfort zone. At my age I had no need to put my brain in "overload"! Shortly thereafter, when my grandson entered his freshman years of college, he was featured on YouTube as a student learning algorithms. Oh no, grandma did not know this new word! I really wanted to know in what area my grandson might be studying.

Days later, when speaking with my ninety year old friend on my iPhone, I happened to mention this new unknown word in my vocabulary. She quickly shared her wisdom of algorithms with me. "Well Ernestine, it is a new brand of vacuum cleaner that has just been developed!"

Now my self-esteem has grown to some degree. I may have limited knowledge, but I do know that algorithms are not for cleaning floors!



Wedding Day

by Elizabeth Wharry

The day Bob and I got married, we were sandwiched between two funerals. It was imperative that we start at high noon. My maid of honor was supposed to be at the church by 11:15am. By 11:45, she still wasn't there. The decision was made to proceed with the ceremony without her. Finally, she walked in at 11:55am!

My mother and I had refurbished a hat she wanted to wear for the wedding. That morning, the glue was still a bit tacky. I told her to wait another half hour before putting it on. Did she listen? Nope! She glued the hat to her hair.

So, I styled her hair around the hat.

I left for the church before my mother was dressed. I had decided to get dressed at the church. I knew one of my parents would bring my car home. My parents and daughter showed up about 11:30am. My daughter was 5 at the time, and was my flower girl. Imagine my surprise at seeing my mother wearing a black and green print dress!

Before the wedding, Bob's dad and Bob's uncle made a bet that we wouldn't last 5 years. It's been 36 years.

But the real surprise was yet to come. Bob's parents pulled us aside during the reception, and handed us an envelope marked "DEED". It was a deed alright...to two burial plots next to his parents!

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

"My wife and I went to a hotel where we got a water bed. She called it the Dead Sea."

Rodney Dangerfield

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Huntsville Street Kid

by G. W. Maynard, written in 2012

I am going to start my story on the saddest day of my life. It was a cold, dreary morning in March of 1948. I had gotten out of bed about 5 a.m. and walked across the room to the fireplace to warm myself from the cold of the night. My mother, younger brother and baby sister remained in bed. After warming myself, I went back to the bed to wake my mother. I could not wake her from her sleep, she just wouldn't move. I ran to the other room of the house to tell my two older brothers and my older sister, to come see what was wrong with our Mama.

She had died during the night.

My Daddy had come in for a visit during the night and had gone to the barn to check on some hogs that had been sick for a couple of days. The law came in to investigate and took my Daddy to jail while they investigated my Mother's death. I'm sure it took a couple of days for my Grandfather to come to where we lived at Courtland. A week or so later my Grandfather got my Daddy out of jail and they buried my Mother.

None of us kids got to go to Mama's funeral and to this day we have not been able to find out where she was buried. My Daddy once said she was buried in Blackburn or Blackmon Cemetery wherever that is, it should be around Moulton or Courtland, Alabama. If anyone has any idea where this place might be, please get in touch with me through the "Old Huntsville" magazine.

A week later we moved from Courtland to Owens Cross Roads to another cotton patch. My older brothers and my older sister were all old enough to chop cotton that summer and I joined them in the picking in the fall. I got to start school at Owens Cross Roads in the fall.

When cotton picking was over we moved to Kildare Avenue in Huntsville where I continued first grade and my brothers and sister hit the cotton patch to chop cotton. After the cotton chopping was over we moved to Brooks Street in the Lowe Mill area. We all moved into a 3-room shotgun style house that Daddy had thrown together with my sister handing him the material that we had put together. There were 6 of us kids, Daddy and our stepmother.

He built another house 10 or 12 feet from the shotgun house. He left us 6 kids in the old house that had cracks so large in the sides of the home, you could stick your fingers in them. Daddy and our stepmother and her 2 kids who had been living with their grandmother and grandfather moved into the house next door.

My oldest brother who was 17 at the time had the responsibility of seeing that we 6 kids were fed. My older sister was 15 years old and had to watch after the rest of us kids. Daddy had made them quit school when they were about 12 years old.

I went to school at West Huntsville Elementary on 9th Avenue for 4 years beginning with the 2nd grade. I never had books of my own and had to hustle to get paper and pencil for school. I often stopped and carried in 2 buckets of coal for a lady on my way to school who would give me a nickel or dime to buy my paper and pencil for school. My older brother and I often hauled off trash for people in the neighborhood to make money for our needs.

I started going to the Courthouse on Saturdays to shine shoes for people. I would make my way around to all the car lots on Meridian Street and Madison Street to shine the salesmen's shoes. It was Saturday and I was ten years old and some of the things I remembered that I really liked to do was to see a movie at the old Elks Theatre, the Lyric or Grand Theatre, or hang out at the City Drug Store and read a comic book and eat a 5-cent double dip of ice cream. Sometimes I made enough money on Saturday to buy a pair of shoes or a pair of jeans or a shirt for school.

I have to say that I loved all my teachers because they helped me through school, helping me with lunch tickets, loaning me their books to do my homework while the other kids were out playing at recess and lunch. I'm proud to say that I made the Honor Roll at least 3-4 times each year in each of the grades; second, third, fourth and fifth. There was a Bible in the bookcase in the back of the room in third grade and I must have read it from cover to cover because it had so many exciting stories in it.

I saw so much in my days on the street and I guess my mind tried to absorb it all. I wish my brothers and sisters had had the opportunity to get more schooling than they could. I don't think anyone knows better than I do what my Daddy stole from my sisters and brothers. He took their childhood and their education. I am so thankful for every teacher I ever knew. God Bless you all.

A special Thank you to our Writers, everyday people who send in their memories..

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Old Fashioned Family Remedies

Note: These remedies are presented for amusement only. Please see a doctor for medical advice.

- Cramps in the neck or leg can be relieved by an application of whiskey and red pepper,
- To help a baby get through post-weaning restlessness, put molasses on the child's hands. Then give him chicken feathers to hold. During repeated attempts to remove the feathers first from one hand and then the other, the babe will tire and fall asleep.
- To cure deafness, drop a mixture of onion juice and raw eggs into the ear.
- A few bay leaves sprinkled here and there will keep ants away. Another good remedy for ants is to clean your countertops with a mixture of vinegar and water, mixed equally.
- For the croup in children, administer one teaspoon of goose oil and one teaspoon of molasses to a child each day.
- Clothing that has been scorched by ironing should be laid in the bright sunshine.
- To overcome sleeplessness, eat a large plate of baked onions before retiring.
- To treat lockjaw, place moistened tobacco on the patient's stomach. Remove immediately when cured.
- Make traps for destructive grasshoppers by half-filling deep jars with a solution of water and molasses.
- To cure alcoholism, have the patient eat an owl egg without knowing what kind of egg it is.
- Use the skin of a freshly peeled banana to reduce the pain and discoloration of a bruise. Place the inner side of the peel on the bruise and hold in place with wet cold bandages.
- If clothing has a musty odor, restore it to freshness by placing charcoal in the folds.
- Clean your piano keys by using a piece of silk cloth barely moistened with alcohol.
- To alleviate the pain of an earache that is not too severe, just blow cigarette or pipe smoke into the ear.
- If you have a canker sore, several times a day apply ashes from a burned corn cob to the area.
- To make your hair thicker, massage the juice of watercress into the scalp.
- When the labor of childbirth is prolonged, blow snuff, held on a goose feather, up the mothers nose. This will induce a sneezing fit, resulting in delivery.
- Remove tar from your hands by rubbing them with lemon or orange peel, then wiping them off.

"Why do scuba divers fall backwards into the water? If they fell frontwards, they'd fall into the boat."

Jerre Paul, Athens

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Pvt. Earl Williams Killed in France

by William Sibley

Earl Cleveland Williams (1925-1944) was a very happy Big Cove boy and popular with his peers. He was a talented athlete, as were his brothers; Delbert, Gene and Austin.

Earl was the youngest child of Alonzo "Lon" Williams and Minerva Ozaline (Sadler) Williams. Earl's mother died when he was a baby, and he lived with my maternal grandparents, William Henry Sadler and Charlotte (Owen) Sadler, who were Earl's uncle and aunt. Earl developed a strong bond with his uncle and aunt and when Earl's father remarried, it was decided that Earl would continue to live with the Sadlers.

One of the saddest days of my life occurred in 1944 when two carloads of Earl's relatives came to our house to tell us that Earl had been killed in France while serving his country in World War II. I was less than five years old at the time, but I still have vivid recollections of that day. Everybody was crying and I didn't understand why, but I knew that something tragic had happened.

Delbert, Earl's oldest brother, was so overcome with grief that he could not talk, but handed my mother a written message instead. Later my Grandfather Sadler went to the train station in Huntsville to meet the train that brought Earl's body home for burial, which occurred in Maple Hill Cemetery. Granddaddy always called Earl his son, so one can only imagine the emotions he had as that train pulled into Huntsville.

Earl spent grades one through nine at Big Cove School, and his high school at Madison County High School in Gurley. He was scheduled to graduate in the class of 1944, but he was drafted into military service during his senior year and never got a chance to finish high school.

When my youngest brother was born in 1944, my parents honored the memory of Earl Cleveland Williams by naming him Earl Carter Sibley.

The following announcement appeared in a 1944 edition of The Huntsville Times:

EARL WILLIAMS KILLED IN FRANCE

Delbert Williams, 1009 East Clinton Street, received a telegram from the war department today that his brother, Pvt. Earl C. Williams, was killed in action in France July 9.

Pvt. Williams was the nephew of Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Sadler of Big Cove. He lived with them until he left for service.

He was sent to England in April of this year, and has been in France since the first of the invasion.

Two brothers are also in the service. Sgt. Gene Williams is with the AAF at Geneva, Nebraska. Corporal Austin Williams is with the Signal Corps in France.

Earl Cleveland Williams was the youngest of seven children born to Alonzo and Minerva Ozaline (Sadler) Williams. He was survived by his father; his stepmother, Cora; his uncle and aunt, William Henry and Charlotte (Owen) Sadler; six siblings, Delbert, Gene, Austin, Vivian, Donna and Mildred; and half-sisters, Josephine, Fausteen, and Mary Clay.

Our Military Veterans Are our Heroes Every Day, Not just on Nov. 11th

with Respect and Gratitude from Oscar Llerena

Special Greetings to the Huntsville High Class of 1966

Strayed Husband

From 1873 Newspaper

Under the heading "Strayed or Stolen," Mrs. S. Hundley of Florence, Alabama, advertises her husband, Andrew Jackson Hundley, in the newspaper. She said he left her about two months ago, in company with one Manda Wyrick, who she believes "conjured or bewildered him" by giving him a cup of coffee to drink, upon the top of which he saw a "blue glass swimming."

They were accompanied by her son Bob, who "left a wife and three children." The deserted matron says, "I want A.J. arrested and handcuffed, if necessary and brought back to me dead or alive, as he owes a good many debts that he must pay, and he owes me a support in my old age." He is supposed to have gone to Tennessee or out West. He is a long, lean, lanky fellow, about six feet high, broad shoulders, thin beard, light hair and complexion, blue eyes and about 45 years of age."

She offers to pay anybody a fair price who will return him to her "dead or alive," and requests all papers in the United States to copy the advertisement one time and forward their bills to her. We give her this one gratis - in fact, we feel like paying her for the enjoyment in reading this.

City News in 1911

C. S. Griswell, a one-armed man of this city, this morning sent a load of bird shot into his left breast by pulling the trigger of a gun with his toe. Family troubles are said to have been the cause of his suicide.

Mr. J. M. Oldfield and his daughter Miss Ora were thrown from their buggy while enroute to the Mill neighborhood yesterday afternoon. Mr. Oldfield was injured about the shoulders, while his daughter escaped being hurt. The animal was frightened at something in the road and ran up the side of the embankment.

The Old Huntsville Hotel walls will be torn down. The walls left standing as the result of the burning of the Huntsville Hotel recently will be torn down, and men were seen today putting up scaffolds to do the work.

For Rent - a new 4 room cottage at the corner of Pratt Avenue and 6th street for rent cheap - apply to J. E. Pierce

Young boy dead on Walker Street - John F. Childers, Jr., the three and a half year old son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Childers, Sr. died at 5:30 o'clock at their home on Walker Street after an illness of several days. The remains were carried to Gurley this afternoon, where interment will be made in the family burying ground.

Fred Peeden is very ill of consumption at the home of his parents on Holmes Street.

Lost - an amethyst ring, on Randolph Street, between Butler's school and Grahams Pharmacy. Finder return to this office and receive reward.

Miss Daisy Ducks is dead. She was aged 17 years and died at the home of her uncle, Mr. J. N. Bogett, this morning at 2:15 at the Abingdon Mill Village. Funeral services will be conducted from the residence by Rev. M. Marlow with interment in Maple Hill cemetery.

Rain Storm Does Much Damage

The continued rain from Saturday night through Sunday flooded the lowlands of the city and did considerable damage in the way of flooding the lawns and washing away foot bridges.

In the Patton Grove neighborhood the waters were especially high. The spring branch was way out of its banks and so was Pinhook creek. Likewise this was true in east Huntsville, where ditches and other low places were completely under water.

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The Third British Invasion

by Lawrence Hillis

Volumes have been written on the first British invasion of the American colonies during the Revolutionary War. The second British invasion of America occurred during the War of 1812. I offer to you for your consideration that the third British invasion of America was the British influence on American music in the 1960s and 1970s. We were doing just fine with Pat Boone, Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Fabian, Frank Sinatra and Chubby Checker when along came The Beatles. I believe they started the invasion with songs like "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "She Loves you" in 1963.

I was 13 years old when I heard those two songs. I ran over to Arnold Hornbuckle's Record Ranch on Andrew Jackson Way and used my grass-cutting money to buy my first album entitled "Something New" by the Beatles. I was hooked. Then came the Rolling Stones with songs like "I Can't Get No Satisfaction," and "Get Off of My Cloud." They were the anti-Beatles. While the Fab Four were singing safe, cheery, love songs like "Can't Buy Me Love" and "Yesterday". The Stones played sexy, dirty, rock and roll songs like "Paint It Black" and "Sympathy for the Devil" written about grief and loss. And yes, I also bought the Stones records.

My third favorite group was The Animals which had big hits such as "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood", "Don't Bring Me Down", and "It's My Life". "House of the Rising Sun" was about the American city of New Orleans. Their next big hit was "We Got to Get Out of This Place" which became a theme song for many of the soldiers in the Vietnam War.

Jim Morrison formed the group the Doors and had a spooky hit song "Riders on the Storm." Van Morrison, born in Northern Ireland, made famous the song "Brown Eyed Girl" that has probably been sung in every bar, night club and dance hall in America.

Did you notice that most British groups do not sing with a British accent? One exception was the Herman Hermits. They had a funny hit called "I'm Henry the 8th I Am" which was about a girl who had eight boyfriends named Henry and was also a takeoff on the English King Henry. Another big hit was "Mrs. Brown, You Have a Lovely Daughter."

Then came the bands with color in their names such as Pink Floyd, Deep Purple, and the Moody Blues. Black Sabbath pioneered the dramatic, occult-inspired image that so many metal bands would use such as pentagrams and allusions to black masses which became so ubiquitous with the heavy metal groups. Black Sabbath also made Ozzy Osbourne a star. So many groups had strange names such as Queen, Led Zeppelin, and the Who.

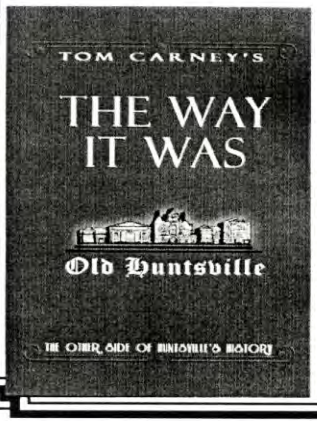
When Fleetwood Mac was formed in the late 1960s the original members John and Christy McVie and Mick Fleetwood were English. Stevie Nicks and Lindsey Buckingham are Americans and joined the group in 1974. Lindsey Buckingham sounds English but he was born in California. Stevie Nicks was born in Arizona and Stevie is short for Stephanie.

Instead of band names, the English artists used given names such as Tom Jones, Engelbert Humperdinck, David Bowie and Rod Stewart. Of course, the most famous of all is Elton John. Sir Elton spanned the decades, selling over 250 million records with 56 songs in the top 40. Since 1970 everyone from kids to grandmothers enjoyed his music.

Many famous British musicians such as Phil Collins, Joe Cocker, and Eric Clapton performed and recorded with various groups. You can hear British music on the radio throughout the day.

Many British songwriters say they were inspired by early American Rock and Roll songs and the same can be said that British songs inspired many American songwriters. In return, Americans helped make them millionaires. We have their albums, tapes, CDs and now playlists on our iPod, Nanos recording devices and phones.

"THE WAY IT WAS,"
THE OTHER SIDE OF HUNTSVILLE'S HISTORY
BY TOM CARNEY



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That's My Drumstick!

by M. D. Smith, IV

I know I was less than ten years old when I learned to choose the drumstick because it was the only part of the chicken I could eat with my hands. My father always preferred the dark meat of the leg and thigh of poultry, and I wanted to be a man like him too.

It worked out well with only my mother and sister in the family; they didn't care for that part of the chicken or turkey, so there was plenty for the men. I'd point anytime the bird was carved and say, "That's my drumstick."

At Thanksgiving, we often ate with one of my grandparents, usually my mother's folks. My grandad also liked turkey legs, and I could not actually consume a whole one by myself, so they'd trim some of the meat (and tendons) off, and I had what was left.

Years later, my wife and I ended up with seven boys in the family (and one girl). Like my dad before me, they wanted drumsticks off the chicken, and those were small. Sometimes we drew straws to see who got the shortest two, and they got their choice of the preferred man's part of the bird. Of course, the second joint was juicy, too, so we'd share that sometimes. Or, if worse came to worst, I'd take the entire back of the chicken, or wings—anything but that white breast meat that was dry and tasteless to me. Then, if I ever had to eat it as a leftover the next day, I'd gob ketchup on it to flavor it into something attractive for my palette.

The Thanksgiving arrived, after so many years of nearly perfectly cooked turkeys, that it was again time for family dinner and this time at our house in 1989. That was the year I decided to use a meat thermometer and to check with timing the bird according to the weight vs. time scale on the outside package. After three hours, I checked it, and the temperature showed a long way (I thought) from being ready. With no kitchen timer set, I sort of forgot about it, and Judy was plenty busy with all the other fixings and guests arriving.

When I finally remembered, quickly removed the roasting pan cover, and looked inside, the thermometer was way over into the red. Not only that, but one glimpse of the bird with shrunken skin pulled away from the legs and thighs let me know this was one overcooked bird. I could have used the drumsticks as hammers—not good for much else. (The Christmas Vacation movie didn't come out until December of that year, but if you ever saw their turkey, you have an idea how ours looked.)

When served, everyone graciously knew to keep their mouth shut except our youngest, who had to comment, "It's too dry. I don't want any."

Thank goodness Judy made plenty of gravy.

After eating a small, thin portion of breast meat covered in a layer of red ketchup, I thought I might try the two shorter pieces of each wing, hating it to go to waste. (No one else would touch them.) The skin was cooked hard, and my first nibble of the part with two bones inside resembled those hard-fried pork rinds. Not bad. Really crunchy. On the next try, I bit the smaller bone into pieces along with the skin and had to spit the whole thing out. I crunched and nibbled the edges of the turkey wing until I could go no longer.

The 1989 Thanksgiving dinner turkey was genuinely unforgettable.

Every year I see the "Christmas Vacation" movie, I think of "our dry crunchy turkey".

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Alabama News from 1911

Police Superintendent Hyland Tells Women to Shoot Purse Snatcher

"I will give any woman a gold medal who will shoot a hole through a purse snatcher" was the declaration of the Superintendent of Police, last night, following the reports of numerous hold-ups of women by low life thieves.

"Of course I cannot say women should go armed on the street, for that would be a violation of the law, but what can I say under the circumstances? They are robbed night after night and we no more think we have the gang broken up until purse snatching breaks out in another section of the city."

Arab Husband Shoots Self - Fired at Wife

"I am sorry that I didn't kill her," said Charles Higginbotham, liveryman, after firing at his wife with murderous intent, then putting three bullets into his own breast near the heart. As a result he may die. Due to alleged unfaithfulness on the part of his wife, the husband recently left her for Texas. He returned yesterday, went to her room and told her to prepare to die. As she was about to run he fired, and when she swooned he turned the weapon upon himself.

Runaway this Morning Could have been Serious

About 11 am today the delivery wagon belonging to E.L. Green, grocery man on East Side Square, became frightened and ran away, dashing north on Washington Street and turning east at the intersection with Clinton at Ezell's Corner. Miss Ellen Weaver and Miss Georgia May Harris were in the act of crossing at this point and came near being run over and perhaps killed. They escaped with a fall and slight bruising, being assisted to their home on East Clinton Street by Officers Whitener and Pamplin.

Farm of 296 Acres is Bought by the Rountree Brothers - Decatur

Rountree Bros, of Decatur, Hartselle and Birmingham have just bought 296 acres of fine land in a sale for a division of the lands by the heirs of the estate of Miss Martha Thompson who died a few years ago. The land is among the best and desirable in the county. It is situated close to Priceville almost ten miles southeast of Decatur.

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Pet Tips from Angel

Superstitions about Dogs

1. When you're being followed pretty consistently by a strange dog, (especially a black dog) there is considerable bad luck to be had in your near future.

2. If your dog appears angry or defensive around some person for no apparent reason, steer clear. It's a sign that that person has bad character.

3. Meeting a black and white spotted dog on the way to a business meeting is good luck! You might just close the deal!

4. A greyhound with a white spot on her forehead brings good fortune, wherever she may go.

5. A dog walking between a courting couple indicates a quarrel will soon take place.

6. A howling dog outside the house of a sick person was once thought to be an omen that they would die, especially if the dog was driven away and returned to howl again.

7. If you have your new-born baby licked by a dog, your baby will be a quick healer.

8. To keep a new dog, measure its tail with a cornstalk and bury the latter under the front step.

9. When a dog is staring intently, at nothing, for no apparent reason, look between the dog's ears and you'll see a ghost.

10. Meeting a dog is always good luck especially if you meet a Dalmatian..

International Dog Beliefs

In the ancient Persian belief system of Zoroastrianism, dogs were sacred beings nearly equal to humans. A central component of the belief required that humans treat dogs with a degree of respect.

Never give your dog a bad meal, take care of pregnant dogs as you would pregnant women and never kill a dog for it will lead to eternal damnation.

In Hinduism, dogs are consider sacred in parts of Nepal and India. They are celebrated in a 5 day festival every year in November.

In India, there's a belief that getting bitten by a dog will impregnate a human with puppies, who will give the human host rabies.

A dog digging a large hole in one's garden, say the Gypsies, means there will be a death in the family.

Dogs howling are signs of sure death, and being followed by a strange dog indicates good luck.

Measles or a cough can be cured by placing a hair of the patient's head between two pieces of buttered bread and giving it to a dog.

What's more, one can determine if an ill person will recover by rubbing his teeth with a piece of food and throwing it to a dog. Should the dog eat it, that is a good sign. Should the dog refuse it, the person will die.

Should a dog be given a bone of lamb at Eastertide, it is said he'll go mad.

The Irish hold it unlucky to meet a barking dog first thing in the morning, and according to the Chinese, a dog has seven consecutive lives. The Moslems say a dog must not be killed, since its life equals that of seven men.

Some additional beliefs about dogs include these: If a dog passes between two friends, it will shake up their friendship.

If a dog runs between the legs of a woman, say the English, her father or husband will punish her.

If a dog is seen eating grass, rolling on the ground, or scratching himself for a long time, it will soon rain.

If a dog howls once or three times and then falls completely silent, a death has recently occurred.

Before a bad storm appears, dogs will retreat under a table or into a safe corner. Dogs are believed to see evil spirits and will warn their owners of their presence. Many stories are written about dogs saving their families by warning them of smoke and fire in a home.

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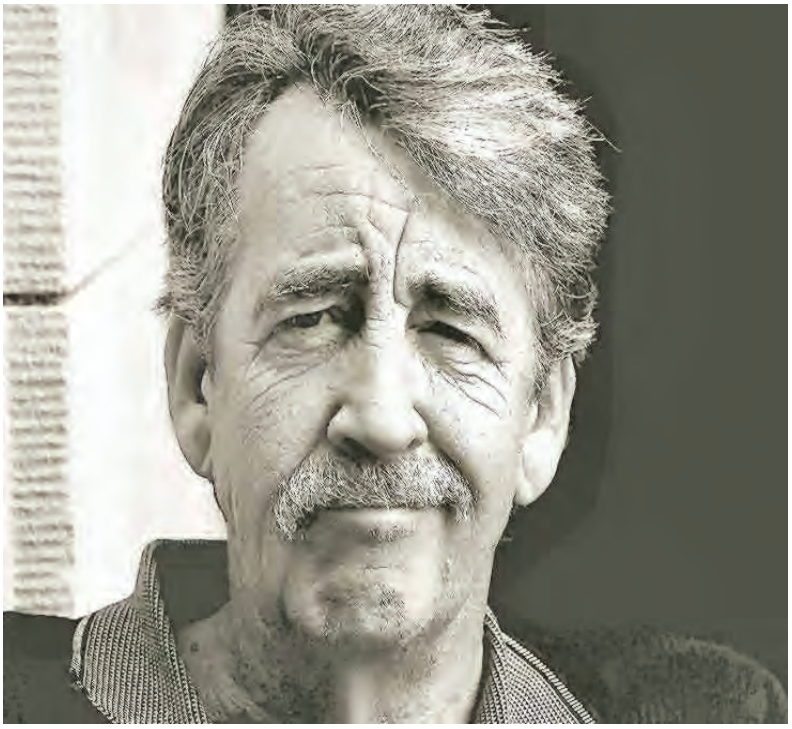
Fuller's Folly

by Tom Carney



Just a few miles up Pulaski Pike, well within the Huntsville city limits, is a cave that was once heralded as the most popular nightclub in this area.

The early history of Shelta Cave is lost in the shroud of history, but some of the earliest stories tell of Confederate soldiers hiding in the cave to escape searching Union soldiers. One rumor that persists to this day concerns a bloody hand-to-hand battle supposedly fought in the depths of the cavern on the shores of a vast underground lake.

Like any other large cave, it has legends woven around it concerning buried treasure, ghosts and eerie noises. These remained just legends with no basis in fact until 1888 when a Mr. Bolen James sold the land to a Mr. Henry Fuller.

Not much is known about the early life of Mr. Fuller but judging from his actions, he must have been a born entrepreneur.

Immediately after taking possession of the cave he hired a team of carpenters to install steps down into the main chamber. Next he assembled a crew of craftsmen to install a dance floor in one of the great rooms with large stand-up bars at each end. He made no secret of the fact that he intended to open the grandest, fanciest and most unusual dance hall in Alabama.

Huntsville had seen its share of weird, wacky ideas, but a dance hall in a cave? Even by Huntsville's standards that was too much. Townspeople began to call the yet uncompleted dance hall "Fuller's Folly."

As is true in many a new business, Fuller soon found himself facing a slight problem—too many ideas and not enough money. Reluctantly he let himself be talked into forming a corporation called, appropriately enough, Shelta Cave Corp. With this new influx of money from investors came new opportunities and it wasn't long before Fuller heard of a new attraction in Nashville that he thought would be perfect for the business.

There had been much talk in Huntsville about a new invention called "electric lights." But while most people dismissed it as just another crazy idea, Fuller was determined to light his dance floor with the "marvel of modern technology". Within days of Fuller's visit to Nashville, workmen arrived to begin stringing wire throughout the cave. Although few people realize it today, when Fuller pulled the switch on his new lighting system, he earned himself (and the dance hall) a place in Huntsville's history as having the first electric light bulbs in Madison County.

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Even this was not enough for Fuller, for as he cast his eyes upon the vast underground lake he began to see another possibility for potential profits. Within the week neighbors watched in amazement as workmen unloaded three large boats from a wagon and awkwardly maneuvered them down the steps.

The citizens of Huntsville must have had a good chuckle when he announced his intentions of providing "Underground Boat Rides." And, as if that was not enough, he purchased hundreds of Japanese lanterns to hang overhead!

Finally the day of the "Grand Opening" arrived, and true to Fuller's predictions, crowds thronged the cave to see the marvel of electric lighting, ride the boats and dance to the sound of a newly hired band. With the admission price of one dollar, Fuller should have been able to make a profit, but unfortunately, he was too deep in debt. Also, the townspeople, after making one or two visits to the entertainment mecca, quickly lost interest.

Desperate for money, Fuller began to travel throughout the South promoting Huntsville and Shelta Cave as a convention center. Evidently he had some success, as the Huntsville Mercury in 1889 ran an article about a gathering of the press association:

"The entertainment of the Press Association by the citizens of Huntsville closed today with a grand barbecue in Shelta Caverns and nearly one hundred delegates and their ladies were in attendance. The affair was gotten up in a delightful manner and the beauties of the place were fully investigated by the astonished guests."

According to rumor, Fuller, or one of his cohorts, in another effort to stimulate business, (and keep down overhead) actually operated a moonshine still in one of the dark corners of the cave. Years later when it was discovered that Shelta Cave was the home of a rare species of blind shrimp, one local wag laughed and said, "Hell, that lickker made a lot of people almost blind, I reckon some of it could have spilled into the lake!"

Another story of the day concerns a duel fought over a lady's honor at the edge of the dance floor. The gentlemen, each slightly intoxicated, were pursuing the same girl at the same time when they happened to accidently meet at the dance. Harsh words were exchanged and to everyone's horror, they pulled pistols from underneath their coats. Both fired and both missed. Fortunately they let themselves be led away before real harm could be done. The only casualty of the duel was a member of the band who was slightly injured by a falling stalactite.

As almost any nightclub owner can tell you, crowds are fickle and within a few years the dance hall was again facing financial ruin. This time, even Fuller's salesmanship could not save it. On June 28, 1897, the cave was sold at a sheriff's sale on the steps of the Courthouse to settle a judgement.

Although there is no documentation to support it, natives of Huntsville who remember the 1920s and 1930s swear that there was once a speakeasy located in the cave. Other sources claim that moonshine was produced in the cave at intervals all the way up to World War II. Another persistent rumor claims the cave was used as a liquor and beer warehouse during prohibition.

In 1968, after being neglected for years, the cave was purchased by the National Speleological Society. An iron gate has been placed over the entrance to prevent accidents. It was made from the bars taken from the old jail located on Washington Street.

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The Story of "Miss Tiny"

by Penny Sumners and Susan Howard, granddaughter

Sometimes strange and wonderful things seem to happen at the least expected time! A few years ago at a board meeting of the Huntsville Pilgrimage Association, a lady who was just joining us asked me if I lived at 408 Holmes Avenue in Old Town, Huntsville. Since I had been researching the history of my home, I was startled and excited with her question. As I said yes, little did I know then but Mrs. Tiny Cole's granddaughter had just introduced herself!

Thus, I began to learn more about my beautiful old house and the wonderful people that were part of its history. I call my house "Miss Tiny" in appreciation of Mrs. Tiny Cole Young who made 408 Holmes her home for over 55 years. This is our story!

In 1805, the land where 408 Holmes Avenue is presently located was purchased at the land auction by Leroy Pope. He planted or cultivated a pecan orchard on his property. Many of the pecan trees are still around as three very old trees are still on the property and they can be viewed in their rows from the air.

The land sold about every 10-20 years to different people until 1868 when Dr. Robert Searcy, a physician, sold the house to Milton Humes in 1873 and moved to Cullman. The 1880s Sanborn maps show a brick house on the property that extended to the current 410 plot. This home does not look like a Queen Anne Victorian style in the drawings on the maps but I am unsure who built that house or what happened to it.

When Milton Humes bought the property in 1873, he was moving here from the beautiful little town of Abington, Virginia to marry Ellelee Chapman, daughter of the former Alabama Governor Reuben Chapman. Humes, an attorney, had met Ellelee when he was a Confederate soldier stationed in Huntsville. When he returned to Huntsville in 1870, Milton Humes bought a huge mansion off Meridian Street near Lincoln Mill circa 1860 calling it Abingdon Place.

Then, he built two identical Queen Anne Victorian houses on the Holmes property with the 408 site completed in 1887 and the 410 site completed in 1897 according to the historic markers. He built the houses but never lived in them nor did his family.

Possibly they could have just been built for rental property for the northern industrialist that Humes, Halsey and other leaders from the North Alabama Improvement Association were trying to attract to the area. This organization became the front runner to the Chamber of Commerce for Huntsville.

Merrimack Mill had been started by a group from Massachusetts in West Huntsville. They built and owned the Mill. The eastern part of the city with Humes leading the charge looked for help from Tracy Pratt, McCormick and others with connections to northern dollars to build the cotton Mills. They were instrumental in the creation of Dallas and Lincoln Mills and streets of the homes that were built in Mill town are named for them.

Milton and Ellelee were community active and involved leaders in Huntsville. (I had been researching the Suffrage Movement locally and now the two projects were converging together!). Ellelee was a leader in the Women's suffrage movement, a champion for underage children working in the Mills, an advocate for the creation of a library and a principal player in the creation of the Huntsville Infirmary to name a few. She was also a charter member of my Twickenham Town Chapter of the DAR.

In 1906, Humes sold the house to Leo Marshuetz. Marshuetz was a dry goods broker in the area but in 1912, Marshuetz took a similar position with a company in Mont-

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gomery, AL where Marshuetz's wife, Rasine had extended family. In 1912, Marshuetz sold the house to dry good salesman from the J. Klaus Store, Wiley Willis Cole and his wife Tiny Vassar Cole.

Prior to moving to Montgomery, Marshuetz had invested in a real estate investment scheme to bring more electric street cars to Huntsville. He had invested with the Clerks and Salaried Men's Addition which went under but they had named a street for him where the car line was to go. Yes, Marshuetz Avenue off Whitesburg Drive is where this new system was to run and it was named after our Leo!

The Cole's had married in 1900 and he moved to Huntsville from Lincoln County, Tennessee and she from Madison County, AL. They had been living on East Clinton Avenue when their young three year old son Nelson died of diphtheria in 1910. After that they wanted to move. By 1911, Wiley was working for J.P. Fuller Grocery Store.

At that time, Huntsville was becoming a growing busy thriving place again with over 7,000 people and it even had a street car traveling down the middle of Holmes Street! (It became Holmes Avenue in the 1950s). The city was rebounding from a smallpox epidemic in the late 1900s and it experienced a population decline in 1900-1910.

The Coles' had a daughter Belle in 1917 and life seemed to be picking up again. Belle was the center of their lives. Then, Wiley's health started to decline and in September of 1925 Wiley Cole died at 52 years of age.

Now, the beautiful Tiny had to make plans for her and her young daughter. In the coming year Tiny married David Young, a salesman with Dunnavants Department Store. They lived in the house until 1938 when Mr. Young died. At that point, the world was being thrust into war, so Tiny made some major decisions to help her economic situation. She worked part time in sales in a local store and in Mary's Ladies Shop. She renovated her house so that she had three additional apartments.

Before 1908, one apartment had been added on the west side of the house. She could accommodate renters in that structure but now she reconfigured it so that she could accommodate other renters as she redivided the inside of the house decreasing her living space.

In 1967, after a full life, Miss Tiny died after living in the house through World War I, the Women's Suffrage movement, the Roaring 20s, the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean Conflict, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Space Race, a lot of the Civil Rights movement and part of the Vietnam War.

Miss Tiny had a front row seat to the changes in Huntsville. She had seen Huntsville move from a population of 7,611 in 1910 to approximately 16,000 in 1950 but then to exceed the 1960 census of 76,000 by her death in 1967. By 1970, there were approximately 139,000 people in the city, double the last census due in large part to the Space Industry and the changes it brought.

Electricity, indoor plumbing and automobiles were some of the new things that directly affected her during her life time. Her life had been full of love but she also had faced many challenges. Miss Tiny did not believe that a lady should tell her age so we will honor her belief and not tell it in here either. Daughter Belle had married and had her own daughter, Susan.

The neighborhood didn't look the same. Many of the homes were apartment houses now as the city grew so much during the 50s and 60s that housing was desperately needed. The house was owned by the family until they sold it in 1977.

A young attorney, Clem Cartron, bought the house and made lots of renovations and practiced law from this location. He kept the house for about 13 years and then he sold it to a family that wanted to make it into a Bed and Breakfast. The Historic Commission had just been recently created and this was considered outside of the guidelines so it never opened in that capacity. Around 1996, local realtor David Martin bought both houses, 408 and 410 and made major renovations. Martin sold the houses at different times to others and we bought the house in 2011.

The house is now a single family dwelling with 4 bedrooms and 4.5 baths with so much character and charm that I smile just thinking about my Miss Tiny. A beautiful garden, a two car garage, a den replaced the middle courtyard between the main house and the 1908 apartment and a carport are new but the outside footprint of the house is the same as Humes built. Miss Tiny made it a home.

Mrs. Tiny Cole's picture is on the wall in my dining room and I hope she would be proud of the way the house has been restored. I am proud of the strength put in the home that Milton and Ellelee Humes made a reality.

These historic homes are treasures from the past that live on in the present.

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"Mama, I Have to Fly!" The Story of Tommy Beal

by John H. Tate

Do you remember what you were doing at the age of fourteen? Tommy Beal of Huntsville, Alabama, originally from Toney, Alabama, knows precisely what he was doing. At fourteen, Tommy Beal took flying lessons at the Huntsville Airport on Airport Road.

King Solomon said to his thousand wives: "Who doesn't have a headache tonight?"

Most children, especially boys, have laid in the grass on their back, looking up at the planes flying overhead and many have said, "I want to fly one of those planes one day." However, the dream goes away as quickly as the child turns over and stands to their feet.

The dream never left Tommy Beal; the dream of flying a plane pulled at him until he convinced his mother to let him take flying lessons. No his mother did not plunk down a wad of cash for her fourteen-year-old son to hop on a plane. Tommy also contributed sweat equity toward his dream of flying. Tommy helped clean and ran errands around the airport until one day, one of the flight trainers offered to give him flying lessons.

Following are some snapshots of Tommy Beal's adventures as a result of him taking flying lessons at the age of fourteen. Just as in a plane, you will not be able to see the entire landscape, only glimpses of this exceptional man's life from your window seat. So, put your trays upright and buckle your seatbelts; you are about to soar on a memory flight.

As the plane pushes back from the terminal gate, we see Tommy taking flying lessons at fourteen; and receiving his flying license at seventeen. When asked why it took so long for him to get his licenses, Tommy said, "Well, you had to be seventeen in order to get your licenses, so I had to wait."

Tommy's wife Barbara is sitting with us; she reminds Tommy to talk about his trip to Kansas City at seventeen. Tommy received permission from his mother and three other kids' parents to fly them to Kansas City, MO, for the FAA (Federal Aviation Association) convention. The kids were all flying students from Sparkman High School.

You settle back into your seat as the plane's engines overtake gravity, forcing the aircraft to be one with the sky. The cabin crew shares information with you to make your flight more enjoyable. You glance out of your window, on the plane's right side. You see that Tommy was also in a band while in high school. The band Jami Hurt & The Mariteens produced the record "IF LOVE COULD BE MEASURED."

You move around a little in your seat to find that sweet spot. As you put the neck pillow

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around your neck, the plane banks to the left, allowing you a quick glance out of the window on the other side.

You see Tommy as a charter pilot, and he is flying Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter.

Jimmy Carter was the Governor of Georgia from 1970 to 1975, ending as he ran for President of the United States. In 1976 Jimmy Carter was elected as the 39th President. Tommy flew the Carters during the latter part of Mr. Carter's governorship and as he was a candidate for the presidency.

In 1972 George Wallace, former Governor of Alabama, was also campaigning for the presidency. During the campaigning, Author Bremer shot Mr. Wallace. Security was tightened on the campaign trail and the Secret Service made Tommy part of the organization.

As you drift off to sleep, you hear someone ask, "Yes, but how about Cher?" Now you are unable to sleep; you sit up in your seat so you can listen to more. The Cabin Attendant comes down the aisle with the drink cart. He looks at you, but you wave him on.

The conversation in the back seats continues discussing how Tommy flew the Allman Brothers to their gigs. He also flew Greg Allman and Cher to the Bahamas and back. Although it was public knowledge that the band did not care much for Cher, Tommy never shared anything he heard on the plane. Your flight is short, and you only have a little time left to try and catch a little sleep.

You think, "My, that Tommy lived an exciting life." Bound and determined not to listen to anything else about Tommy Beal, you close your eyes and try and block out the voices. It's working; you felt yourself drifting off to sleep. Then you heard it.

Tommy Beal was flying Medivac on September 11, 2001, and was one of the only few planes allowed in the air that day. Now you are wide awake; you could not get to sleep even if your life depended on it.

As you listen closer, you realize that Tommy is talking. "On Nine-eleven, it was very quiet in the sky; there was nobody else up there." Tommy sits quietly with a reflective look.

The flight crew announces that it is time to place trays and seats upright and tighten your seatbelt as the plane prepares for landing. As you are readying for landing, you heard someone in the back say, "Oh, we did not talk about Tommy flying with Bob Hoover as a test and stunt pilot." Bob (Robert) Hoover is one of the world's most renowned test/stunt pilots.

As you left the plane, Barbara, Tommy's wife, said, "Tommy started riding motorcycles at around age 10 or 11. He loved Harleys, and he kept one in the hanger at the airport, so he'd have it when he flew home.

He would have his mom meet him with his leathers, and she would cry all the way home but knew he was living the life he'd always wanted. He was an Assistant Manager at Harley Davidson in Huntsville at one time. One day Bo Jackson came in and wanted to ride one of the Harleys. Tommy and Bo rode all over the area, going as fast as they could.

After entering the terminal, Tommy Beal turned around. With a smile, he said, "Sorry the flight was no longer; I could tell you a funny story about Rosalynn Carter. Also, I have a lot of memories of Motley Crue, Metallica, Def Leppard, Bon Jovi and James Brown."

"I will leave you with what I always tell young people. Never panic; you are never dead until you stop breathing."

"Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on cologne and they go out and smell each other."

Andy G., 6 years old

Tornado 1989:
The First Sign of What is to Come

by John Michael Hampton

It was early in the afternoon on November 15, 1989. The Tennessee Valley had been placed under a high risk of severe weather, as was most of the southeast, from Mobile up through central Kentucky. A line of severe storms was west of the Tennessee Valley and would soon make its presence known.

Dave Jacobs was not supposed to start his shift at the National Weather Service until 4:00 pm. He knew that the severe weather potential was there, so he arrived early and started his shift at noon. One minute later, the Severe Local Storms Unit (SELS) issued Tornado Watch 750 for 1989, which would cover the afternoon and most of the evening, as it expired at 8:00 p.m.

The intern for the Huntsville Field Office, Scott Sharp, arrived four minutes later and began monitoring the radar. At 12:45 p.m., given the explosive nature of the storms coming from the west, the office sent out a Special Weather Statement advising what safety precautions needed to be taken. Many counties activated their spotter networks at this time, including Madison County, where Huntsville is located.

At the same time, Colbert County Emergency Management received a report of half- to three-quarter-inch size hail. This was only the first sign of what was to come.

At WBRC-TV in Birmingham, James Spann was following a Tornado Warning for northern Lamar and Marion counties. The storm was north of Guin, and continued to indicate the formation of a tornado on radar. By 1:11 p.m., the storm was showing signs of weakening a little, which led to the warning for Marion County being downgraded to a Severe Thunderstorm Warning by the National Weather Service office in Birmingham.

Around the same time, eight year old Chris Lisauckis accompanied his mom to the front yard of their northwest Huntsville home. Chris, who was being home schooled, had been fascinated by the weather for most of his life. He remembers the atmosphere feeling quite eerie on that November day, and the clouds were moving very fast that day. His mom said, "See how fast those clouds are moving? This is going to be a bad day."

By 1:40 p.m., the storm was moving out of Marion County, but was still very strong. Huntsville's NWS office issued a Special Weather Statement which told everyone that a warning for Lawrence and Franklin Counties

"I used to look at my dog and think, if you were a little smarter you could tell me what you were thinking. And he'd look at me like he was saying, 'And if you were a little smarter I wouldn't have to.'"

Fred Junclaus

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might be necessary if the storm continued to be severe.

At 2:09 p.m. the radar showed that these storms had intensified again to the point that radar was showing the formation of a new tornado. A new Tornado Warning was issued for Lamar and Marion Counties, as the storm had moved back into their area as it had strengthened.

Back at WBRC-TV in Birmingham, James Spann was continuing the coverage of the severe weather. He states that the system "will take about five to six hours to make its way across the state."

At 2:33 p.m., another Special Weather Statement revealed that residents of Lawrence and Franklin Counties could expect a warning at any time. That warning, a Severe Thunderstorm Warning, was issued for Marion and Winston at 2:55 p.m. Rotation in the storm had declined in intensity by that time.

Meanwhile, another Severe Thunderstorm Warning had been issued for Lauderdale, Colbert, and Franklin Counties at 2:41 p.m. A completely different storm along the line was producing hail from pea size all the way up to half an inch in the area.

At 3:01 p.m., a Severe Thunderstorm Warning was issued for Lawrence County as the previously tornadic storm approached. The storm was now in the coverage area for both the Huntsville NWS office and local Huntsville TV stations. Gary Dobbs broke into programming on Huntsville ABC affiliate WAAY-TV 31, to let people know about the storm situation. He stated that he wanted to "give a quick update on the line of storms as they move into the western part of the Tennessee Valley."

Straight line winds from the Lauderdale County storm produce the first damage of the afternoon. EMA directors document trees down north of Florence, as well as homes and vehicles severely damaged in Killen.

At 3:40 p.m., the southern storm showed a hook echo on radar. Therefore, the warning for Lawrence County,was upgraded to a Tornado Warning and was expanded to include Morgan County.

At 3:54 p.m., the warning was downgraded to a Severe Thunderstorm Warning based on damage reports and information on radar, and the warning was expanded to include Limestone County.

Many people in the Tennessee Valley breathed a sigh of relief as the news was transmitted. Little did they know that destruction was looming over the area and would intensify over a southern Huntsville road at the height of rush hour traffic. Stay tuned for the second part of this series, "Destruction on Airport Road."

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